

DARKO SUVIN:
A LIFE IN LETTERS

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DARKO SUVIN
A LIFE IN LETTERS

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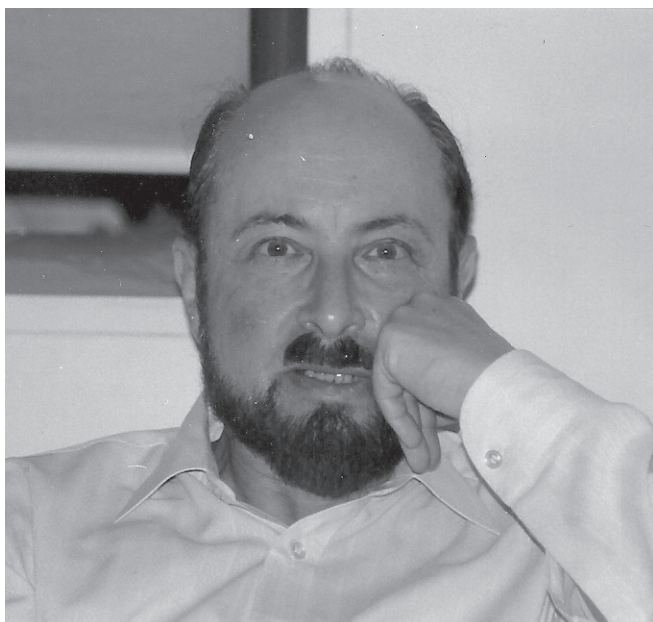
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A. Introductory



Berlin, 1999

Foreword:
Crossing the Border with Darko Suvin

Phillip E. Wegner
University of Florida

The great book o'er the border went
And, good folk, that was the end.
But we hope you'll keep in mind
You and I were left behind.
May you now guard science' light
Keep it up and use it right
Lest it be a flame to fall
One day to consume us all.

Bertolt Brecht, *Life of Galileo*¹

Darko Suvin: A Life in Letters is the second collection of essays by Darko Suvin with which I have had the pleasure to have been involved, the other being Suvin's recently published book, *Defined by a Hollow: Essays on Utopia, Science Fiction, and Political Epistemology* (Peter Lang: 2010). I mention this other volume at the outset, as these two collections should be understood as complements to each other, while both also extend further Suvin's already far-reaching achievements.

The work of Suvin most well known by the European and North American intellectual and scholarly communities falls into two areas. First, in his role as a founding editor of the academic journal *Science-Fiction Studies* and as the single most significant scholar of the form to emerge in the 1970s—Mark Bould recently referred to his earliest English language writings in the field as “the Suvin event”—Suvin played a central role in the establishment of science fiction as a legitimate and important field of scholarly inquiry in its own right.² For this latter work in particular, he was named in 1979 the tenth recipient of the Science Fiction Research Association's (SFRA) Pilgrim Award to honor

¹ Bertolt Brecht, *Life of Galileo*, trans. Wolfgang Sauerlander and Ralph Manheim, in *Brecht Collected Plays*, Volume 5 (New York: Vintage, 1972), 96.

² Mark Bould, “Introduction: Rough Guide to a Lonely Planet, from Nemo to Neo,” in *Red Planets: Marxism and Science Fiction*, ed. Mark Bould and China Miéville (London: Pluto Press, 2009), 18. For a further discussion of the importance of these essays, see Tom Moylan, *Scraps of the Untainted Sky: Science Fiction, Utopia, Dystopia* (Boulder, Co: Westview Press, 2001).

his lifetime contributions. Secondly, in a wide range of essays, some of which are collected together in his volume *To Brecht and Beyond: Soundings in Modern Dramaturgy* (1984), he helped secure for an English-speaking audience the reputation of the great German Marxist playwright and thinker, Bertolt Brecht. Moreover, as highlighted in many of the essays reprinted in this volume, Suvin's work also extends into critical theory, political epistemology, globalization, and Asian (in particular Japanese), literature and culture, some of the last appearing in the volume, *Lessons of Japan: Assayings of Some Intercultural Stances* (1997). Finally, Suvin is a widely published poet, earlier work collected together in the volumes, *The Long March, Notes on the Way 1981-1984, Poems* (1987) and *Armirana Arkadija* (1990).

All of these rich and diverse interests and accomplishments are on display in the essays and poems collected together in *Defined by a Hollow* and in this special issue of *Paradoxa*. While the essays in the former most prominently illuminate Suvin's contributions to science fiction and Utopian studies, along with his shift in the 1990s to what he calls "political epistemology," the essays in this issue center more, although by no means exclusively, on other aspects of his project: his work on narrative theory, Brecht, modern theater, Japan and Asia, and on various aspects of what social theorists describe as globalization, including its most terrible face in the U.S.-led war on terror. In what follows, I want to argue that the importance of the essays in this special issue of *Paradoxa*, in addition to their inherent interest and the insights they offer into a wealth of pressing concerns, lies in the way they cast Suvin's more well-known contributions to science fiction and Utopian studies in a new light, and thereby help us grasp even more effectively the ways his entire ongoing project offers an effective model for the labors of contemporary intellectuals.

Before delving into these issues, a bit more biographical information will be useful to those less familiar with Darko Suvin and his work. However, let me first recommend at this point that the reader momentarily break off from reading this foreword and turn to the volume's opening poem, "Autobiography 2004: De Darci Natura." While putting on display Suvin's gifts as a poet, this work also offers a view from the inside as it were, a dynamic and vibrant expression of the lived experiences of which the following can only offer the most schematic of outlines. Suvin was born on 19 July 1930 in Zagreb, Croatia. He received his PhD from Zagreb University, the oldest and among the most prestigious of the universities in southeastern Europe, where he also began his teaching career. After running afoul of some of the political currents at the university, Suvin immigrated to North America,

ultimately settling, in the banner year of 1968, at McGill University in Montreal, where he was Professor of English and Comparative Literature until his retirement in 1999. After his retirement, he relocated to Italy, where he resides today.

His interests in dramaturgy, Brecht's work, and science fiction are evident in his early Croatian volumes, *Dva vida dramaturgije: eseji o teatarskoj viziji* (1964), *Od Lukijana do Lunjika* (1965), and *Uvod u Brechta* (1970). After his move to North America, Suvin, along with R.D. Mullen, founded in 1973 *Science-Fiction Studies*, at a moment when academic literary studies was becoming increasingly receptive—in response in part to the vibrancy of the New Left and in part to the innovations of a burgeoning critical theory (movements that, as the essays here also clearly bear out, deeply influenced Suvin's thought)—to scholarly work in the area of what was then referred to as “paraliterature”—popular and genre fiction including science fiction, fantasy, mystery, horror, romance, comics, and children's literature. From his earliest work, Suvin refused the marginalization of science fiction implied by this characterization, not only locating the genre within a long literary tradition of popular transgressive fictions that stretched back to the work of Lucian of Samosata, Thomas More, and François Rabelais, but also consistently maintaining that the finest contemporary science fiction is among the best of all literature produced in the present. “The stakes” at play in science fiction, Suvin argues in an essay on paraliterature, “thus, are the highest imaginable... : the education of Homo sapiens for earthly salvation.”³ Here we see the combination of artistic, philosophical, and political commitment that I will suggest momentarily is characteristic of all of Suvin's writing.

Suvin's first published scholarly essays on science fiction appeared in the mid-1950s, and in English at the end of the 1960s. Many of them have been collected together in four volumes, *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction: On the Poetics and History of a Literary Genre* (1979); *Victorian Science Fiction in the UK: The Discourses of Knowledge and Power* (1983); *Positions and Presuppositions in Science Fiction* (1988); and *Defined by a Hollow*. As samples of this prolific output, this special issue of *Paradoxa* includes a 1969 popular article written on the occasion of the first moon landing and concerned with early science fictional imaginings by Jules Verne and H.G. Wells of voyages to the moon (moreover, its anti-militarist stance also makes the political investments in all of his writing fully evident); a 1987 open letter to a Japanese reader of *Metamorphoses*, which also reprints a transcript

³ Darko Suvin, *Positions and Presuppositions in Science Fiction* (Kent, Oh: The Kent State UP, 1988), 20

of his acceptance speech for the SFRA Pilgrim Award; and finally a sobering 2000 assessment of the future possibilities for science fiction in a situation marked by “first, the decomposition of the political horizons of the 60s’ counter-culture (or any other oppositional mass politics) and the privatizations of organizing belief, and second, the tremendous loss of prestige by technoscience because of wars and ecological disasters.” Suvin also co-edited two volumes of essays collected from the first five years of *Science-Fiction Studies* (published in 1976 and 1978); and the collections, *Other Worlds, Other Seas: Science-Fiction Stories from Socialist Countries* (1970), *H.G. Wells and Modern Science Fiction* (1977), and *US Science Fiction and War/Militarism* (2005), the last opening with a long original essay of his own.

One of the things that makes all of this work so distinctive is the way in which it negotiates the strictures and disciplinary boundaries that define proper academic inquiry. This discipline-transgressing approach is fully on display in what is perhaps Suvin’s single most well known scholarly accomplishment: his elaboration of the poetics of modern science fiction. In the landmark 1972 *College English* essay, “On the Poetics of the Science Fiction Genre,” a revised version of which served as the opening chapter of *Metamorphoses*, Suvin defines science fiction “as the literature of cognitive estrangement,” further elaborating a few pages later his definition in the following way: “SF is, then, a literary genre whose necessary and sufficient conditions are the presence and interaction of estrangement and cognition, and whose main formal device is an imaginative framework alternative to the author’s empirical environment.”⁴ And finally, he subsequently adds, “SF is distinguished by the narrative dominance or hegemony of a fictional ‘novum’ (novelty, innovation) validated by cognitive logic.”⁵

It is worth paying special attention here to the deep importance of Brecht’s work for Suvin’s definition of science fiction. The concept of *estrangement* is, of course, derived from Brecht’s *Verfremdungseffekt*, itself a politically charged act of readapting (*umfunktioniert*) the Russian Formalist concept of *ostranenie* (остранение), the distancing of the reader or viewer of a work of art from the assumed or naturalized world they inhabit un-self-consciously in their everyday lives. (The other major figure influencing Suvin’s thought here as elsewhere is Brecht’s great Marxist contemporary and the most important theorist of Utopia in the first half of the twentieth century, Ernst Bloch). In this move, we see at work one of Suvin’s most characteristic and productive intellectual

⁴ Darko Suvin, *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction: On the Poetics and History of a Literary Genre* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1979), 4 and 7-8.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 63.

strategies, something that will also become quickly evident to the reader of the diverse and wide-ranging pieces collected in this issue: Suvin's willingness to cross boundaries of all kinds—between disciplines, forms, and so-called high and low culture—and productively cross-fertilize concepts drawn from a variety of sources. This is something as true of the form of Suvin's writing as it is of the content: the essays and poems in this volume of *Paradoxa* repeatedly challenges the protocols of what constitutes “proper” scholarly writing.

Equally significantly, as I argue elsewhere, Suvin's linking of science fiction and Brecht's dramaturgy helps us more effectively recognize science fiction, along with film, as one of the most significant cultural technologies (*techné*) to emerge out of the period of tremendous intellectual, political, and artistic ferment known as modernism.⁶ Suvin's championing of both Brecht and science fiction as premiere achievements of twentieth century global culture thus contributes immeasurably to the project of opening up the closures of what Fredric Jameson names the “ideology of modernism” that rose to prominence in the post-World War II context of “late modernism.”⁷ This ideology of modernism—a product of the period of the Cold War and what the political economist Giovanni Arrighi calls the “long twentieth century,” the hegemony of the U.S. in global capitalism—turns on an absolute privileging of the “autonomy of the aesthetic,” drawing sharp distinctions between both art and politics and art and mass or popular culture, including, of course, science fiction. The challenge to this ideology of modernism continues in Jameson's own contributions to the revisioning of both Brecht's work and science fiction, *Brecht and Method* (1998) and *Archaeologies of the Future: The Desire Called Utopia and Other Science Fictions* (2005). In these two works in particular, Jameson's indebtedness to Suvin's thought is evident throughout. In turn, the long-standing intellectual exchange between Suvin and Jameson—the latter, along with the great British and Welsh Marxist intellectual and fellow scholar of theater, Raymond Williams, representing Suvin's most significant Anglo-American interlocutors—continues in a thoughtful review essay of Jameson's *Brecht and Method* by Suvin, first published on the occasion of the 1998 centenary of Brecht's birth and reprinted below as chapter 14.

⁶ See Phillip E. Wegner, “Jameson's Modernisms; or, the Desire Called Utopia,” *Diacritics* 37, no. 4 (Winter, 2007): 3-20; and my forthcoming, *Ontologies of the Possible: Utopia, Science Fiction, and Globalization* (Oxford: Peter Lang).

⁷ See Fredric Jameson, *A Singular Modernity: Essay on the Ontology of the Present* (New York: Verso, 2002), 161-79.

The last decade or so has witnessed within the science fiction scholarly community the publication of a series of critical reassessments of Suvin's pioneering work. While a number of these engagements are quite productive, building upon Suvin's insights and retooling them for a very different intellectual and institutional situation than that in which they originally intervened, other responses have cast his legacy in a more doubtful light.⁸ Roger Luckhurst, for example, argues that "Suvin's definition of SF is not historical but political—cognitive estrangement arises from Suvin's particular take on Marxism." While he acknowledges the "immense value" of Suvin's "preparedness to think with critical paradigms about a popular form," Luckhurst maintains, "his theory of SF essentially condemns much of the genre in a way that, although from a very different political perspective, is essentially continuous with high cultural disdain for popular culture."⁹

There is a fundamental contradiction at play in Luckhurst's evaluation, one that helps bring into sharper focus what is at stake in one of the debates currently taking place in the field of literary and cultural criticism: a debate that stages a stark choice between either formalism, old or new, or historicism.¹⁰ On the one hand, Luckhurst in effect accuses Suvin of being another late modernist, once again positing a fundamental "formalist or conceptual" (read *aesthetic*) distinction between high or great art and culture.¹¹ At the same time, Luckhurst re-enacts the old late modernist distinction between art/culture and politics, or what he refers to as "Suvin's particular take on Marxism." As Jameson notes in his comments on the related "Against Theory" arguments of Steven Knapp and Walter Benn Michaels that helped set the stage for the hegemony of the New Historicism (out of which the cultural historicist approach to science fiction develops), readers of Luckhurst's polemic are left with

⁸ For a sampling of some of these responses, see Gary Westfahl, *The Mechanics of Wonder: The Creation of the Idea of Science Fiction* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1998); Carl Freedman, *Critical Theory and Science Fiction* (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press, 2000); the essays collected together in *Learning from Other Worlds: Estrangement, Cognition, and the Politics of Science Fiction and Utopia*, ed. Patrick Parrinder (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001); Tom Moylan, *Scraps of the Untainted Sky: Science Fiction, Utopia, Dystopia* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2001); and the essays collected together in *Red Planets*.

⁹ Roger Luckhurst, *Science Fiction* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), 8.

¹⁰ For a useful overview of the debates between New Historicism and New Formalism, see Marjorie Levinson, "What is New Formalism?" *PMLA* 122, no. 2 (2007): 558-69. I touch on these issues in the final section of my essay, "The Beat Cops of History; or, the Paranoid Style in American Intellectual Politics," *Arizona Quarterly* 66, no. 2 (2010): 149-67. And finally, for a related discussion, see Fredric Jameson's Introduction to *The Modernist Papers* (New York: Verso, 2007), ix-xxi.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 11.

the distinct feeling “that we are being told to stop doing something, that new taboos whose motivation we cannot grasp are being erected with passionate energy and conviction.”¹² Thus, while he will go on to claim that his own cultural historicist approach is “less judgmental and prescriptive,” the real target of Luckhurst’s judgments and prescriptions is clearly Suvin’s expressed radical revolutionary, dare we say Utopian, commitments. Suvin never denies that his work renders judgments because what explicitly drives all of his intellectual engagements is the desire to recover, and encourage the future production of, a tradition of cultural texts that contributes affirmatively to efforts not only to critically engage with contemporary global capitalism, but ultimately to replace it with a far more humane mode of living in the world. To do otherwise, would be to produce work that remains in the ideological trap of what Brecht refers to as “*folgenlos*—what had no particular material consequences, and fostered no particular change.”¹³

Thus, the continuity that Luckhurst finds between Suvin’s politically charged evaluations and cultural elite dismissals of popular culture is imaginary (I deploy the term imaginary here in the double Lacanian sense, of positing images of the self and other that are at a distance from the real). The latter are forms of what another of Brecht’s most significant intellectual progeny, Roland Barthes, names, in an intervention that takes place at the very height of the original late modernism, *mythologies*. (The impact of Barthes’ work on Suvin was a lasting one, and Suvin informs me that he “read *Mythologies* in French quite early on, I think around 1960, because I had accidentally ordered for the Department library his *Michelet* [Editions du Seuil, 1954] and was stunned by his approach, so from then on I read almost all he published.”) *Mythologies* are diverse cultural significations—novels, essays, reviews, photographs, film images, cultural practices, sporting events, legal trials, built spaces, and so forth—that work to “transform history into nature.”¹⁴ Barthes further notes, “myth is depoliticized speech. Myth does not deny things, on the contrary its function is to talk about them; simply, it purifies them, it makes them innocent, it gives them a natural and eternal justification, it gives them a clarity which is not that of an explanation but that of a statement of fact.”¹⁵ In Barthes’s sense then it would be Luckhurst’s apparently politically neutral historicist approach—implicitly less

¹² Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism; or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991), 183.

¹³ Fredric Jameson, *Brecht and Method* (New York: Verso, 1998), 25.

¹⁴ Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*, trans. Annette Lavers (New York: Hill & Wang, 1972), 129.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 143.

judgmental, descriptive rather than prescriptive, and “more inclusive”—that would have far more kinship with the mythological form of high culturalist attitudes.¹⁶

Barthes goes on to argue,

There is therefore one language which is not mythical, it is the language of man [sic] as producer: wherever man speaks in order to transform reality and no longer to preserve it as an image, wherever he links his language to the making of things, meta-language is referred to a language-object, and myth is impossible. This is why revolutionary language proper cannot be mythical. Revolution is defined as a cathartic act meant to reveal the political load of the world; it makes the world; and its language, all of it, is functionally absorbed in this making.... The bourgeoisie hides the fact that it is the bourgeoisie and thereby produces myth; revolution announces itself openly as revolution and thereby abolishes myth.¹⁷

Speaking, or writing, in order to transform reality rather than preserving it as an image: Barthes’s description of the de-reifying, anti-mythological force of revolutionary language can serve as an effective characterization of Suvin’s work as well, both in his essays on science fiction and in those you are about to read here.

In addition to calling into question the separations between various disciplinary concerns and between culture and politics, there is a third way in which Suvin’s project teaches us to challenge the borders that still define our contemporary intellectual labors. This work too is already evident in Suvin’s writings on science fiction. In his *Introduction*, Luckhurst regretfully notes that in his study he has “limited the range to American and British SF almost exclusively.”¹⁸ Now while such an approach does enable Luckhurst to offer any number of valuable reflections on particular science fiction texts, and even on something of the nature of the generic institution within these national cultural contexts, the re-imposition of the borders of nations and language has the effect of distorting our understanding of the genre. This is because science fiction occupies what Pascale Casanova, speaking of the novel form more generally, names “international literary space, or else of the world republic of letters ... a long historical process through which international literature—literary creation freed from its political and

¹⁶ Luckhurst, *Science Fiction*, 11.

¹⁷ Barthes, *Mythologies*, 146.

¹⁸ Luckhurst, *Science Fiction*, 10.

national dependencies—has progressively invented itself.”¹⁹ Conversely, the “appropriation of literature and literary histories by political nations” has the effect, Casanova argues, of rendering criticism “blind to a certain number of transnational phenomena that have permitted a specifically literary world to gradually emerge.”²⁰

From his earliest writings—as evident again in the essay on the “lessons of selenography”—Suvín has stressed the transnational and global nature of science fiction. The first part of the second section of *Metamorphoses* offers a survey of modern practices of “cognitive estrangement,” extending from the early sixteenth through the latter part of the nineteenth centuries (while also pointing back toward pre-modern “Hellenic” and “Hellenistic-cum-Roman” traditions) and ranging across the European continent and into the United States. The second part of this section opens with a discussion of the work of H.G. Wells, which founds the specifically modernist form of cognitive estranging literature that will be named in the 1920s by the American writer and editor Hugo Gernsback “science fiction.”²¹ He then concludes the book with a survey of nineteenth and twentieth century Russian and Soviet science fiction, and an overview of the accomplishments of the great Czech modernist writer, Karel Capek, whose work—with the singular exception of his play, *R.U.R.*, that gave the world the word “robot” (and which ironically, Suvín maintains, represents “the weakest part of his opus”)—remains to this day deeply underappreciated by British and U.S. readers.²²

I would suggest that it is Suvín’s own experiences of migration, border crossing, and marginality in the modern world system that makes his work so attuned to the need to approach literature and other cultural phenomenon in a truly global context. As the essays collected together in this volume indicate, Suvín continues to expand his intellectual horizons, both bringing into focus particular aspects of and freely borrowing from a diverse array of cultural and intellectual traditions. It is in its myriad forms of border crossings—and in its openness to diverse perspectives, the connections it draws across various fields, disciplines, and cultures, and the depth of its political commitments—that the real importance of Suvín’s work for our dire present situation emerges.

¹⁹ Pascale Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters*, trans. M.B. Debevoise (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), xii.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, xi.

²¹ See Sam Moskowitz, “How Science Fiction Got its Name,” *The Prentice Hall Anthology of Science Fiction and Fantasy*, Ed. Garyn G. Roberts (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2003), 1127–35.

²² Suvín, *Metamorphoses*, 270.

Such an approach is brilliantly on display in Suvin's essay, reprinted here as Chapter 13, "On the Epistemology and Pragmatics of Intercultural Theater Studies." In this wide-ranging and provocative discussion of contemporary intercultural theater studies, Suvin draws the first of the four theses he proposes from Barthes's reading of Bunraku, the traditional Japanese puppet theater. On this basis, Suvin establishes an opposition between "fetishized and lovable bodies," an opposition whose importance he goes on to argue lies in its modeling of "two opposed epistemic models of understanding and values." The next section of the essay turns to the controversy surrounding Peter Brook's staging of *Mahabharata*. Here Suvin develops a second thesis that could readily apply to his own project as a whole: "when appropriation furthers human creativity or productivity, the psychological pain collaterally produced should be borne." In Brook's case, however, this appropriation fuels an operation that Suvin, in his third thesis, calls "mythical estrangement," an embracing of an "illusory plenitude of being" fantasized to be possessed by the other. Finally, Suvin turns to *mugen nô*, the classical Japanese theatrical form concerned with the realm of the supernatural, spirits, and ghosts, in order to develop his fourth and final thesis: "The alternative, the fertile, way to practice interculturalism is to doubt a presumed *Western* universal." This then enables Suvin to postulate a final crucial opposition between mythical—"A performance like Brook's makes a Westernized *Other* confirm and update the West's globalizing Self and value-system"—and critical estrangements—"we—our ruling image and value-systems—can become strange to ourselves." This latter, Suvin then concludes, would involve "a shift of paradigm, with the full force of Thomas Kuhn's sense of paradigm shifts as revolutionary, in my opinion today the beginning of wisdom." It is precisely this kind of emergent wisdom that arises from Suvin's myriad practices of border crossing.

Let me conclude this foreword with a brief note on the organization of the collection. As the title suggests, this volume is meant to present something of the contours and trajectory of Suvin's rich and complex intellectual life in, among, and of letters. Hence, in a large part, the essays are presented in the chronological order of their writing, albeit with some of them being revised at a later date (indicated by the second date following the title). At the same time, we have assembled the selections under three broad headings, each of which contains a number of poems that set a more personal affective context for the work that follows. The first section following the introductory material brings together a diverse range of essays and poems selected from Suvin's writings in the 1970s and 1980s, and explores topics ranging from science fiction to

issues in narratological theory, to the essays and poems that result from Suvin's encounters with Asia. The second section, composed largely of essays written in the 1990s, brings together the briefest of samplings of Suvin's investigations in dramaturgy more generally and Brecht's work in particular. The final section, made up of essays and poems most of which were originally written in the last decade, confronts in an immediate and effective way the transformed landscape, wrought by the forces of globalization and political violences of all kinds, that we now collectively inhabit. Finally, the collection concludes on a note of affirmation, with a meditation on the lessons for the present of communism, as "a locus, an orientation for movement, and a horizon," as well as of the Yugoslavian experiment, on which he is now working. This is followed by a very short poem, whose title, "Ausklang: My Lady Hope," signals one final time the desires that are expressed in the poem, the collection as a whole, and, most importantly, the life to which it gives voice. It has been a rich and exemplary life, one that we as readers now have the privilege to help celebrate.

Gainesville, FL
December, 2010

Introduction: On Climbing the Mountain of Life (2011)

Darko Suvin

Let us assume we are in an S-F world consisting of one huge, continent-like mountain, but for the rest physically similar to Terra. The fauna and flora are also as on Terra, but all animals, including people, find themselves upon birth at the foot of the mountain, and each day wake a bit higher up the mountain. We don't do anything to achieve this, it's just a cosmological given of this world. The mountain has belts of horizontal climate, maybe with pheromones and other substances influencing behaviour, that correspond to our infancy, youth, middle age, older and old age. Our freedom consists in what we do, while awake, to each other and to our self-understanding, but whatever we do, we shall wake tomorrow morning another bit higher on the mountain. So too shall all the people around us: the very many who are at the beginning above us, those of our cohort progressing vertically at the same speed, and an initially small but inexorably increasing number of people below us following us upward. We can all meet during the day as chance and will have it, but next morning our height on the mountain will have changed equally for all of us, however we may have roamed left or right.

At the beginning, the fact that we can mingle freely during waking, indeed the very fact of being on Life Mountain, makes us neglect this ascension. There is no other way to ascend anyway, nobody can go up and nobody can go down (unless in fancy and in memory), and of course nobody has ever seen the Top of the World. We all simply live together during the day but wake in the morning in our new higher belt, impregnated by its colours and effluvia. The naturally or artificially sleepless ones fall asleep at a given point before dawn and simply wake up higher. Some of us may suspect the way up the world is arbitrary or indeed unjust, but of course, the mountain shape is the only one possible in any world. We have many sayings by our philosophers roughly meaning "the way of the Mountain is unfair," and I spare you the silly preachments of our priests (mostly Gnostics) why their benevolent or malevolent gods have made Ascension a law for life.

The only thing that changes for a given height (that is, age) cohort is that our view widens. When we are low, we all look simply around us, at our own height and generation; then we become interested in what those above do, for they rule and teach us. Sexually, for example, higher-up males are much more interesting for girls, and higher women ever more so for boys. But until we are in, as we say, the 10 veli-s (that is, after

10,000+ daily ascensions) we don't really look down, except to laugh at the mistakes of the neophytes, very similar to our now forgotten ones; of course, for some it happens much later, or never. However, around the age of 18 veli-s (and given our ever progressing age in this epoch of progress, the average length of life is now about 25 veli-s), when the cohort has begun noticeably thinning, some people begin to look wistfully not only at their memories of the foot of the Mountain but also at the lower cohorts. Indeed, for the sillier among us (usually male), there is a rash of divorces at what is called "the airy eighteen" in order to marry anybody between 6 and 10 veli-s, in a kind of magical belief that prolonged contact with a younger skin shall make you shed many veli-s. This doesn't happen, you inexorably wake up each morning at your given heights of ascension, so the new cohabitations usually don't last too long, but I suppose they can be fun for both sides while they last.

For those philosophically disposed, which means seeking sense, the airy eighteens and perhaps the next five veli-s are a kind of imaginary apex of one's personal metaphorical mountain, pictured as a cut-out your ascension has made on Life Mountain: still in possession of fair health and good sight, yet relatively high enough up the slope, one can begin looking at what one has done, why not more or better, and perhaps remedy the worst ascensional aberrations. This has been happening to me, dear Terran Reader for the last, say, four-and-a-bit veli-s, or to make it more comprehensible to you, dozen or so solar years.

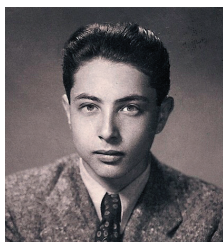
This little apologue or parable is a way to tell you how I look at the present book in our less clear and more complex world, how its letters, so to speak, "sample" my life. My metaphorical path is here not necessarily ascension, but I look at it as it were from above, maybe as at a geo-satellite shot of a winding river. What do I see?

I see a naïve, not too stupid youngster who, having undergone the horrors of utter insecurity in World War 2 under the Croatian, German,



age 6

and Italian Fascists, decides to do his utmost so that this shall never happen again to him or anybody else. The only alternative in Yugoslavia—and a very fetching one!—was Tito's socialism, militant Enlightenment in the Balkans, into which I threw myself with zest as a high-school and university student activist, and then as a budding writer of literature and theatre criticism, occasional translator



high school

of poetry from the main European languages and soon verse-smith myself.¹ There I also encountered utopian and then science fiction. The first seemed to me clearly my ancestors, the second my fellow-pioneers hewing out new imaginative, not necessarily unreal, possibilities for people; both were sources of understanding, when read with critical discernment. Also, while participating in student theatre in the 1950s and early 60s, a largely utopian institution, I encountered Bertolt Brecht, an adorably sly and heretical Modernist poet-communist, whom I've since never stopped learning from and writing about.

I then see an initially unconditional lover of socialist Yugoslavia being from, say, 1949 to 1965 subjected to a series of refusals and scorns by his beloved, whom I really thought of as (in, say, a version of the French Marianne) a beautiful young woman: a libido cathexis in Freud's terms. The apex of these refusals was for me a nasty incident in which I was, during my tenure of a Ford Foundation grant in the USA (mostly at Yale) refused re-election as teacher at the University of Zagreb. I concluded I



1961

could be an alienated intellectual anywhere in the world; and it would be morally and materially easier to be such in the Welfare State West. So I took up one of the invitations, that I had at first loyally rejected, to teach in the USA for 1967/68. At this time, the time of the murders of Martin Luther King and Bobby Kennedy, and much turmoil by my students at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, whom I supported, I decided I was also a supporter of the Monroe Doctrine: America for the Americans. I had a semi-serious fantasy that most of them had been conceived on the back seat of a car and had imbibed its fumes into their germ-plasm, making them kinda car-centaurs—which I was not. Their races and battles were important and interesting, but not mine.

I finally see a revolutionary intellectual while there was a revolution around; but when he had to choose pragmatically between these two aspects in non-revolutionary times (it was quite clear to me that the 1968 youth revolt, for all its fertile aspects which I tried to absorb, politically led nowhere), he chose to be an intellectual, transporting the

¹ I have described this in two instalments of my *Memoirs of a Young Communist*, the first pertaining to childhood up to and including life under the Ustashi and the second to 1945-51; they can be found in the periodical *Gordogan* [Zagreb] for 2009 and 2010, alas as of yet only in Croatoserbian. Further instalments up to the mid-60s are planned.

estranging and still radical viewpoint of “it ain’t necessarily so” into cultural studies. Thus I accepted a tenure-track teaching offer at McGill University in 1968 to there demanded university and They got the shape (so one in suit and tie that SF begins and Swift, Czechs too....



1970, with favorite Picasso

2000, got a Canadian citizenship, and would not have left Canada after pensioning if it had been nearer to the Caribbean. True, Yugoslavia was on the Mediterranean, but it was no more in 2000; so I opted for Italy, where I had frequented high school during World War 2 and had many friends. I did not realize the climate had shifted quite a lot: Milano is now where Morocco was in my youth, a meteorologist tells me.

Eventually, looking better at my geo-satellite river after a landslide, I realized that I had been meandering through two historical landscapes. The first is Fordism: the late Leninist period and the post-World War 2 Welfare State. The second is Post-Fordism, where corporation is wolf to corporation, state to state, human to human, and the resulting psychophysical horrors are unmitigated. Between the two, there was a (for me) psychologically important transition ca. 1973–1992, in culture called Post-Modernism.² My poems and short prose of this transition (chapters 5, 7, 8, 9, and 15), while facing the personal price to be paid

² I have written a lot about this plague of Post-Modernism, but it doesn’t seem worth retraversing this particular battle today; a brief list:

“The Soul and the Sense: Meditations on Roland Barthes on Japan.” *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature* 18.4 (1991): 499-531 (now essay 1 of my book *Lessons of Japan*. Montreal: CIADEST, 1996).

“A Modest Proposal for the Semi-Demi Deconstruction of (Shakespeare as) Cultural Construction.” In Loretta Innocenti et al. eds., *Semeia: Itinerari per Marcello Pagnini*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 1994, 67-76.

“Introduction to the ‘Non-Cartesian Subjects’ Issue” and “Polity or Disaster: From Individualist Self toward Personal Valences and Collective Subjects.” *Discours social/ Social Discourse*, special issue “The Non-Cartesian Subjects, East and West” (10 essays) co-edited by Kōjin Karatani and D. Suvin, 6.1-2 (1994): 7-21 and 181-210 [large size].

“The Use-Value of Dying: Magical vs. Cognitive Utopian Desire in the ‘Learning Plays’ of Pseudo-Zenchiku, Waley, and Brecht.” *Brock Review* 3.2 (1994): 95-126 (now essay 5 of my book *Lessons of Japan*. Montreal: CIADEST, 1996).

by an émigré, still held to the larger framework of Blochian hope. No doubt, the dominance of Fordism and the Welfare State ended economically about 1973, but my understanding was very laggard: I only began to realize it after 1989, while the full consequences dawned on a cushioned intellectual with the NATO bombings of Belgrade in the 1990s. Thence a certain break in tone, say beginning with chapter 16 of this book. The horizons, though not the orientation, shifted: before that break I was still confident that the antifascist impetus and achievements of my youth could be carried on—with whatever modifications needed towards a New Left and whatever huge difficulties in finding a way between capitalism and Stalinism. After the mid-1990s I was confident no longer: my team was in full rout, not only material but also moral, and all that could be done was to try and understand how come and why, what were some possible rearguard skirmishes, and how to salvage some valuable methodologies and approaches of radical Modernism into our increasingly horrifying future. The dystopian horizon of the poems in ch. 18, 22, and 24 renders this realization. A look at the contents of this special issue of *Paradoxa* shows that the earlier essays could be inscribed in a somewhat heretic or innovative wing of academic cultural pursuits, themselves marginal to orthodoxy, such as studies of science fiction and utopian studies, or of Brechtian stances. To the contrary, in the essays of chapters 20, 21, 23, and 25, new subject-matter demanded to be met—laboriously, since for all my interest I had never analytically focused on economics or politics, and the methodology had to be somewhat different from the one I had followed for almost half a century.

And yet, the book ends with an allegorically realistic poem, on *My Lady Hope*.



Mid-70s, with wife Nena in Montreal

“Synchrony as Aim and Reference: A Thesis on Parody’s Horizons.” *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature* 23.2 (1996): 475-83.

“Two Cheers for Essentialism & Totality: On Marx’s Oscillation and its Limits (As Well As on the Taboos of Post-Modernism).” *Rethinking Marxism* 10.1 (1998): 66-82.

“Besinnung and What May the Century Amount To.” *Yale Journal of Criticism* 17.2 (2004): 287-311.

TO CARRY OVER

The following poem has been
rendered possible by one of the
great masters, John Berger, to
whom it is illicitly dedicated.

We exiles are all
Specialists in packing
We know what to leave behind

We take with us
Suitcases that we can lift
We leave behind us
Connections and ways of life

We take with us
Birthdays, marriage anniversaries
The shelters of gestures and jokes
The words for bread and coffee
We know desperately well
Railway stations and airports
We anesthetize this Fate
By crosswords and mystery stories

Our luggage is
Anxiety and hope
To survive
To work

Wherever we come, languages shift
To the dismay of lexicographers
The orthography grows unreadable
We build new houses of words

We are carriers
Transported and deported
Thus metaphors

This wine our blood

The poetry of mulatto tomorrows
Will be in our languages
We carry it
Like cattle-cars cattle

The maximum diameter of the universe
Is 240 times 10 to the 24th kilometres
We had no need
For this calculation

It's not so easy
Bridging Milky Ways
We are thirsty
Carrying goods over

London 14509

Autobiography 2004: De Darci Natura

With thanks to brother Nazim Hikmet

Beginnings

I was born in 1930, amphibious year in between disasters.
I've left my native city for good in '67
I left it many times before & returned many times since
Until that year, it was 1991

when it left me
Alone with my writings, Nena,
a few friends, smouldering memories,
Mourning, indignation.

When i was 11 i fled from the killers speaking my language
Already i had begun learning other languages
I had refused to learn playing the piano, some obscure
Daimon led me to say
"I'll learn languages instead", deciding
Daimon, his bitter tears
at age eight into my soup scotched
All talk of going to Palestine.

When i was 11 i heard it on the radio
the Germans were bombing Beograd
When i was 69 i saw it on television
the US were bombing Beograd
Between the bombings my life was spared—
i owe it to the dead
To speak up against fear: articles for Wall Newspapers
First utopian sketch at 17, first poem at 21
On a May First, already

Elegiac, a girl was leaving me, the Party was leaving me
(I knew the first and not yet the other). When
I was 13 i changed from
a refugee in my carved-up country
To refugee sundered from my country
amid another language
Crossing a narrow sea with hundreds in a fishing boat, seriously
Holding on to the one suitcase

Too young to be afraid amid minefields, under Nazi bombers
 No more anxious than usual for a **confinato**
 Whose parents could be shot any morning. So i crossed from occupation
 To liberation, into the city of Bari

marvellous to youthful eyes

Where horse-drawn coaches had a plank
at the back between the wheels
 For daring schoolboys to jump on and sit
 Feet dangling.

When i was 21 my daimon decided, stubborn daimon,
 Walking the sunlit streets of a Spring Sunday
 To quit the repetitive certainties of engineering for the discoveries
 Of arts & letters, of the boards

that mean unforeseeable life

People in student theatre
won out over things in the lab
 With my heart in my throat.

Thus it all took shape, in the yellow afternoons of Zagreb
 In the sunlight blazing back blue from Adriatic wavelets
 Between the lines of Balzac

& Shakespeare, the Russians & Krleža,

Tito & Hegel, Engels
& Lenin on the two souls in each of us
 All irretrievable now, the communist
youth, confident hopes,
 & i was on my Way.

Reflections

Some grow up to know well the names and kinds of trees, others
 Of city streets (Mirkec knew all those of Zagreb
 Better than any taxi-driver)

i grew up knowing departures

Thru guarded borders, but reading Dante, & Bert, & Nazim
 Understood i was one of the demographic tens of millions
 Exiled by injustice.

I am lucky: i've slept mostly in my own bed, even if at times

In poor rented rooms, & only twice, briefly, in friendly
 Camps for refugees, a pet nightmare
 like the car backfires
 Bursting upon my ear, for years, like German bombs;
 i haven't really hungered
 Tho near enough to guess at it

& quite near enough to understand terror & humiliation
 & how reason is the only shield & sword
 In proletarian hands, labour-power
 sellers of brawn & brain
 Like old Bert, my example in politics:
 "a party consisting of one person"
 (His writings, friends, his unforgotten memories)
 "Closely allied to communists."

I've loved many women of my time, loved the best image
 Of my possible self in & together with them
 Monogamy comes to me as a kitten purring at my
 Ankle, i stroke its head
 distractedly, with real affection.
 I'm changeable but loyal while it lasts, i envy only the dead
 Milton, Marx and such ilk.

I rode a bicycle around Zvonimirova Street as a boy
 A Vespa around Zagreb & an NSU scooter to Lošinj
 At the age of 30 i flew
 for the first time, Dubrovnik to Beograd
 I've had three small cars, two accidents, & left driving gladly
 Preferring to steer my thots down unforeseen roads
 I've survived the worst of capitalist **realia**, bombs & cars
 I've been lucky

To escape, to see & know much Europe, much North
 America, the warm seas & breezes of the Caribbean
 & Mediterranean, & of course Japan
 that princess descended from the Moon
 Cruel & kind; & i learned from the gods of the sea waves,
 of the Sava
 & Thames & Avon & the Seine, Saint-Laurent & the Spree,
 The plangent fates of humanity

the poems are the best me
& the best i can say for myself is
i kept the faith comrades
In this sad & wondrous time.

What did i want? The pursuit of happiness when young,
but more & more
One thing: to live this brief life on beauteous Earth
Not like exploited tenant
buckling down to parasite bosses
Nor like landlord, but like steward
handing on to those coming after
Our family house preserved, cleansed from the worst vermin
Maybe even repainted.

I wanted to believe, as brother Nazim, in the trees,
The wheat, but above all the sea—**thalassa, thalassa!**
& in my strange fellow forked
animals, man unkind,
In my own class, presumed intellectuals: alas, i could not
Even women not rarely failed me
or i failed them, class
Corruption runs deep...

I grew discontented with the worsening
times, not happy to be
A nay-sayer like savage Swift, but making the best of a bad obligation
As the addictive drug of destruction
spread our rulers among;
I loathe our killing-machine power set-up, but also
The cruel gods of our small cosmic sector, the sadistic
Godlet of blind biology. The calcified system has shut us down:

Surely other universes must be better made, surely

We could make even this botched world better!

More similar to Mozart

beauteous like Botticelli

Stern & compassionate like all great teachers, a forgiving mother

Infinite like the wine-coloured sea.

264-1504

Glossary

confinato = restricted to a particular small area e.g. town, first step on the scale of camps

Mirkec = pronounce “mere cats,” stress on first (short) syllable, diminutive of the name Miro

realia = hardware items

thalassa, thalassa = “the sea, the sea!”, cry of Xenophone’s Ten Thousand after wandering for years through strange inland places

B. Meeting Other Worlds (1969-87)

**The Moon as a Mirror to Man; or
Lessons of Selenography (1969)**

(Lost English lecture at the International seminar "What after the Moon?" Trieste SF Film Festival July 14-15, 1969. Retranslated from a Croatian translation by DS.)

Penser qu'on vivra jamais dans cet astre,
Parfois me flanque un coup dans l'épigastre.

...

O Terre, o terre, o race humaine,
Vous me faites bien de peine.

...

—Ah! Je vous disais donc, et cent fois plutôt qu'une,
Que j'avais le cœur mal, le cœur bien à la Lune.

Jules Laforgue, "Complaintes et imitations de
Notre Dame de la Lune"

There is no doubt that a successful sojourn of people on the Moon will entail a great development of some special sciences, first of all astrophysics with geophysics and theoretical physics, then space medicine and medicine in general, etc., etc. It is not necessary to dwell on this at length, not least because the specialists concerned won't fail to copiously remind us of it in their yearly requests for funds from governments and tax-payers in order to properly exploit these beautiful possibilities. Perhaps in the longer run it is more important that a successful mastery of flights to the Moon is a precondition for any further exploration of our planetary system, and then, after some centuries, probably also of the nearest planetary systems of other Suns. And yet, even when these achievements are fully taken into account, acknowledged, and classified as an object of admiration, the basic question raised by the flight to the Moon remains still untouched. That is: Will the Moon be an inglorious repetition of the Renaissance discoveries that in the last instance led to a solidification and ramification of humanity's inimical division into nations and classes? In more general terms: *Will the mastery over access to the Moon be used for material and moral liberation or enslavement of humanity?* Is the arrival on the Moon a utopian or an anti-utopian act?

This futurological question may be answered by employing a number of different scientific and philosophical categories, but I'd like here to employ some lessons from *art*, namely the Science Fiction (further SF) which dealt with travel to the Moon. Of course, literature is not science, so that even SF, although some of it claims to be based on extrapolating, has never been—nor does it pretend to be—a prophecy about the future of humanity. The use of SF in futurology is therefore not possible in the same way that a good historical novel may be used in teaching history. SF is not a “future history” but—as all literature—a sum of visions about potentially possible destinies of humanity; in the best case, SF could be a partial catalogue of imaginative possibilities—in this particular case, of the possibilities in using the Moon. *A question about the Moon implies an answer about Man*. The question “What after the Moon [landing]?” really implies: “What will happen to humanity, to each of us, after traffic with the Moon becomes something like a transatlantic flight?”

Such answers have often been given in SF from Lucian, the folk legends, Dante, and Ariosto on, probably in the most brilliant guise in Cyrano's satire *The Empires and Provinces of the Moon* which dates back to the 17th Century. Since I've argued this at length in my book *Od Lukijana do Lunjika (From Lucian to the Lunik*, Zagreb: Epoha, 1964), perhaps it is at this moment most useful to look at the stances implied in the two best known “Moon novels,” Jules Verne's diology *From the Earth to the Moon* and *Around the Moon* and H.G. Wells's “scientific romance” *The First Men in the Moon*.

In Verne's vision the world is composed of discrete, physical, quantified—in a word individual—units. The basic problem in this world is *how to link* such discrete units, people and their hardware—that is, locomotion or transport. Therefore, Verne's central interest is in *travelling*, as can be already read off the titles of his most famous works: In addition to the already cited Moon titles, for example *20,000 Leagues under the Sea* or *Around the World in 80 Days*. The central literary device of Verne's is thus the fearless traveller identified with his transporting hardware—as Nemo with the “Nautilus” submarine, or Barbicane, Nicholl, and Ardan with the “Columbiad” projectile to the Moon.

In Wells's vision, on the contrary, the world is not composed of elementary units but of continuous, biological, qualitative, collective, changeable processes. The basic problem for this vision is how to avoid the historical revenge for capitalism's sins against humans—that is, *the temporal degeneration* of social functions and conscience (the software) in a biological guise: as in the Morlocks and Eloi of *The Time Machine*, the Martians of *The War of the Worlds*, the Selenites of *The First Men in the Moon*. The central literary device of Wells's is the figure of the

scientist as a suffering sorcerer's apprentice—the destiny of not only Cavor in the Moon but also the Time Traveller, Moreau, Griffin, and other protagonists of his most significant works.

Thus, Verne's horizon is as a rule closed in time, circular in space—his heroes return exactly to where they started from having changed nothing of importance—and primarily benevolent. It is as a rule (one significant exception will be mentioned later) bound by the Earth's horizon, so that the trip to the Moon is mostly a giant fair attraction, a kind of super-size merry-go-round where high up in the air funny and pathetic events come about for the consumption of the readers and watchers down below. The Earth is without any doubt the center of Verne's universe, and to cure the main ills of mankind it is merely necessary to bring about better communication: an ideology of Cook's Tours as global political ideal (with a Saint-Simonian pedigree).

Wells's horizon, on the contrary, is open to all the possibilities of the future and dangers of space. His openness involves vulnerability, it opens primarily on catastrophe: originally, he wanted to call his first SF story *The Anachronistic Man* instead of *The Time Machine*. Transposing his personal and class feeling of history into ontology and global destinies, the human species looks to Wells increasingly as an anachronism. But the image of an anachronistic humanity has two faces. The face turned toward the author's present, a self-satisfied bourgeois empire, is a flame of critical warning and an active call for a wiser age. The face turned toward the author's future is the darkness of ceaseless suffering, and his protagonists become helpless witnesses and victims. Our present, this flight to the Moon, participates of both.

In other words, Verne felt no need for any radical Novum; Wells's Novum is present but terrible, it is the Future personified as a horrifying, inhuman biological genus of Selenites, Martians, Crabs (or the dogmatic Blind in "The Valley of the Blind"). Verne did not want or need a vision of a radically different future (at least not in his main phase in the middle of the second half of 19th century—later a final, different, black Jules Verne also appears). Wells could not but show the destructive future, while avoiding to delve deeper into its causal nexus. The end of his stories is therefore inconclusive and factitious: Dr. Moreau's island is left to its fate, the Martians are conveniently destroyed by bacteria, and the connection with Cavor on the Moon also breaks abruptly off, leaving us to guess what finally happened to him. The future within the world of the story is disposed of, but this is so unconvincing that it remains hanging over the reader like the sword of Damocles, which can at any moment fall down on his head, like a sensational menace coming up from the deepest mythical fears of humanity.

Yet for all the differences between Verne's and Wells's vision, they both belong to the humanist mainstream of SF as an artistic reflection on other possibilities and lateral worlds. Their visions thus necessarily share some important, basic similarities. There is an important exception to Verne's benevolence and to the optimism of his central phase: there is one branch of human affairs toward which his stance was always critical, even satirical. Whoever has read *From the Earth to the Moon* must have been impressed by the grotesque image of the Baltimore Gun Club with its symbolically crippled members, whose only joy in life is fabrication of bigger and more destructive guns. *War* and *militarism* are Verne's deepest aversion, so that Captain Nemo uses the treasure found on the bottom of the sea to help the liberation movement of the Greek people, as a pledge of friendship between free peoples (we need more such SF captains today). And the deepest anxieties of Wells were tied to interracial violence (Morlocks against Eloi, Selenites against Cavor, Martians destroying humanity as the Whites destroyed the "negroid" races of newly discovered and conquered regions). The knowledge that the Nazi V2 rockets and the ICBMs are the main *basis*, and the erection of orbital and Lunar stations for nationalist prestige the main *reason*, for investigating the Moon, for this wondrous and in some ways majestic enterprise which we are witnessing in these days—this knowledge would fill Verne and Wells and all the other writers in the "selenographic" or Moon-describing tradition (from Lucian and Plutarch by way of Kepler and Godwin to the great Cyrano) with black horror and revulsion.

In sum, we can use Verne and Wells and the whole artistic-cum-cognitive tradition of selenography as a yardstick for the mendacity of the pseudo-scientific brainwashing to which we are in these days treated through uncounted cubic meters of printers' ink and kilowatts of radio and TV energy. This euphoria, as in the patient anesthetized with "laughing gas," is *lying* in the sense of Hegel's observation that only what is whole is true (*das Wahre ist das Ganze*), that no single empirical fact may be taken at its face value without factoring in the context in which it happens. What is the context of the Moon landing is so well known that it would be almost ridiculous to mention it again, were it not indispensable because of the strange circumstance that it has been passed under silence in all the printings and electronic emissions. The context of the Moon enterprise in this our year 1969, namely, is one of half a dozen bloody mass killings, from Vietnam by way of West Asia and Biafra, to "smaller" killings whose victims barely surpass some hundreds per week, such as those in Central America, in Southern Africa, and in a dozen more underground and guerrilla movements, not omitting Greece (so beloved by Captain Nemo) and northern Ireland.

It is, furthermore, the context of mass violent military repressions from Czechoslovakia to Argentina and from Malaya to Brazil. It is the context in which hundreds of thousands of people are hunted as wild animals by means of the most sophisticated technologies of killing, from infrared rays and helicopters to Flying Fortresses and chemical defoliation agents—precisely as Wells foresaw for his Martians’ behaviour toward people (the Martians were, however, naively metaphorical, they only drank human blood...). In order not to prolong this list indefinitely, let me adduce only one central fact: hundreds of millions of people (to repeat: probably more than 1,000,000,000), *one billion people* hunger, and have a median life expectancy of between 25 and 30 years. In this context there is no doubt that both Verne and Wells would hold that the Moon landing, this great achievement of human imagination and technique, is used for very ambiguous and potentially very dangerous goals.

The propaganda machines to which we are these days so uncritically subjected like to compare the landing on the Moon to the first animal venture on dry land. If only this were so! Or even, if only we could really draw a parallel to Columbus’s caravels which, when all is said and done, did discover (at least for Europe) a whole New World with all its wonders! But if history is any teacher, we have to fear that the best parallel is, at this moment and in this context, the also fantastic imaginative reach and invention of the airplane. The airplane could be a great liberator of humanity, the eraser of frontiers rendering possible for each person to live where he wished when she so wished. And yet, besides enabling businessmen and diplomats to lie to each other more quickly, the airplane has intervened into human history—at least up to now—mainly to enable quicker and much huger mass slaughtering of people. The ape sat himself down in the airplane (wrote Krleža in the 1930s) and started to throw bombs. I acknowledge that by the way this invention has contributed to really helpful meetings of people and landscapes (I flew here from Canada). But it is dubious that the airplane has up to now decisively contributed to people’s realization of their generic being, as Feuerbach and Marx would say, or to the hominization of Sapiens, as Teilhard would say. In spite of all racket from the propagandist drums and tam-tams of the modern Leviathans of States, armies, and “ethically neutral” sciences, it is imperative to see and to say that the Moon landing was not effected by people *tout court* but by the equivalent of *colonels of the imperial armies*, while its *generals* direct the venture.

As long as this is so—and it is today so without any doubt—and quite irrespective of the uniforms worn by all these generals and colonels, it is the duty of at least an intellectual to take a critical stance toward the

enterprise of Apollo 11 (and all such further Soviet or US enterprises). A critique does not mean a reactionary refusal—since Man should not unglue himself from this Earth on which God put him—and I hope you haven't taken this contribution of mine to mean that. I'm in principle a strong supporter of interplanetary and interstellar flights, and I've been writing about such a literature for 15 years now. Yet the Moon is still, as the old Persian legend had it, only a mirror of Earth. At this moment, it is a hugely magnified mirror which shows us the human image more clearly than at any time since Plutarch wrote "About the Face on the Moon" (*De facie in orbe lunari*). This landing on the Moon is therefore not centrally a matter of technology: the technology enables a clearer envisioning of the human face. As I suggested at the beginning, the question about the Moon implies an answer about the humans. The question about the Moon is a question about liberation or enslavement of the species Homo. *Historia docet*: if futurology has any point, it could learn from both Verne and Wells that they didn't believe in a Moon which would magically liberate their protagonists. Verne's heroes don't reach the Moon, which is why all ends happily; Wells's reach it and find on it a caricature of technocratic capitalism, which is why all ends unhappily.

Such prefigurations in SF, which is thereby defined as a vanguard of a literature oriented toward the human future, are not without interest precisely in these days, when fantastic promises hide fantastic menaces. *Thus, selenographic fiction is not the future history of the Moon, but it is a warning against future possibilities of history on Earth.*

Preliminary Theses on Allegory (1977)

1. The problem of allegory is the obverse of the problem of “fiction,” i.e., of the relationship of art to truth, or imagination to normative doctrine. Allegory and its problematics have to do with both the production and the perception of organized (formalized, artful, transmittable) discourse: *what can the artificer/producer say and how is the user to perceive what was said*—the what and how referring to epistemological and political possibilities and taboos. Allegory is thus a *via magistra* to basic questions of human creativity and its historical determinants.

2. Within literature—here defined as the whole body of transmittable, organized, artful discourse in word-statements—allegory appears as a sign of clear relationships between true (sacred or numinous) and feigned (profane) texts, between socially normative doctrine embodied in a privileged body of texts (tribal cosmogony and bestiary, Holy Writ, mythical historiography legitimizing the rulers-that-be, scientifico-philosophical orthodoxy, etc.), and new creativity *generically discontinuous* from that privileged body. Since in class history the normative doctrine and its interpretive system are as a rule closed and presumed ahistorical, all admissible new creativity is supposed to be written around it, officially in the status of secondary illustration and lower, expedient genres. New texts claiming equal or contiguous generic status with the canon are then in competition with these doctrinally privileged texts; they are socially disallowed, declared apocryphal and heterodox (or indeed heretical).

3. Allegory is thus a more or less clearly admitted relationship between a new literary statement—chronologically and ideologically consecutive and in that sense secondary—and an already existing privileged doctrine whose statement it reproduces (*egoria*) in a variant and estranged (*allos*) way.

The new statement gains its social legitimacy from outside itself, from pre-existing statements. Yet being generically different, the new statement has necessarily a different horizon (Aristotle’s *telos*). There is an inherent tension between faithfulness (piety) and creativity—the static diachrony of doctrinal tradition and the deviating synchrony of social observation. Since in order for any new text to exist at all, the old has to be reproduced in a variant way, allegory can only fulfil its basic function or be significant when it is “faithful after its own fashion.” Even the most believing creators are uncomfortable allies for priests.

4. Further differentiations within allegory can be undertaken on the basis of such different interactions between the letter and the spirit, the vehicle and the tenor, the narrative or manifest level and the informing belief or meaning.

One should distinguish “small forms” of “low,” oral origin—such as the riddle, the non-human fable, and the parable, all containing an element of paradox, of *conflict of authority* provoking the user’s transference of judgement—from mythical or religious allegories in the strict sense, which are scribal “large forms” assumed into “high literature.” The latter may or may not contain a conflict but their overall tenor lies within the hegemonic horizon of a *confirmation of authority*, effected by precise parallels between the doctrinal meaning and elements of the text. The structure of the allegorical “low forms” is determined by a tension between the experiential relations within the narrative (however fantastically transposed) and the informing doctrinal belief. The structure of “high” allegorical forms tends to *a priori* determine all of its significant elements by the belief hardened into a doctrine. The low forms are often witty; the high forms are often wooden.

5. *Conflictual allegory* communicates with the doctrinally innocent or naive (Schiller) user disposed to hear a startling proposition. *Confirmational allegory* communicates with the doctrinally informed or sentimental user disposed to hear a reinforcement of the doctrine. The Dantean practice (and theory) of polysemy tends toward a compromise, fusing the strength of the large form with the elasticity of the conflictual mode. Such a fusion is approached by all great practitioners of allegory (e.g., in drama, frequently in trial or judgment scenes: Aeschylus, Aristophanes, some medieval Mystery writers, D. Lindsay, some Shakespeare, Brecht).

6. Conflictual allegory uses mimetic realism on the narrative level (for example, the parables of Yehoshua in the Bible or of Brecht), while confirmational allegory tends not to (for example, the absurd episode with the key called Promise in *Pilgrim’s Progress*). From this vantage point, the 18th-20th C. “realism” can be envisaged as an ensemble of agnostic literary movements that does not openly admit to a clear relationship with a privileged doctrine. Yet the doctrine, thrown out through the main door, is reimported through the back window in the shape of makeshift, fragmentary and often competing doctrines of “natural reality” and its “imitation” or “reflection,” unified by the twin axioms of individualism and positivism. In the 20th century, it is precisely the collectivistic reintroduction of an ambiguous and elastic

allegoresis which accounts for the neo-medievalism of our narrative and dramatic literature.

Literature abhors a vacuum of belief.

7. In this light, “non-fictional” writings pertaining, say, to the philosophy of science are also within the allegorical mode. *Das Kapital*, *The Special Theory of Relativity* and the Synoptic Bible are conflictual allegories; Kempis’s *Imitation of Christ*, your normal handbook of physics, and Stalin’s *Problems of Leninism* are confirmational allegories.

Further, “realism,” pretending to zero-degree allegory, is usually a shamefaced allegory of a zero-value system—say, critically (the price is made clear) in Balzac, or uncritically (the price is occulted) in the aforementioned handbook of physics.

8. Indeed, if we define “literature” as in point 2, the problem becomes how to avoid simply changing that label to that of allegory. But then, labels too are a shorthand for a supposedly pre-existing content. Perhaps the only way out of this impasse is to put into radical doubt the initial religious notion of sacred production vs. profane reproduction. Every Judgement Day is also genesis (Bloch), and Genesis is every day: today is the first day of the rest of our existence.

At the Cusp: Seven Poems from 1984

Loving: An Epiphany of Roman Spring

I love the fish, sighed the Daoist
Feeding them from the shore. So do i,
Snapped the shark.

14484

Peonies & the Poet

(Variations on Barbarity and Beauty after Bai Juyi)

*Every monument of civilization is at the same
time a monument of barbarity. (Walter Benjamin)*
—for Shush, glimpsed in the carriage—

Spring matures: ladies unbelievably dazzling, promises
Of earthly paradise, hurry in bright carriages thru crowded
Lanes of the capital to the fragrant peony gardens,
Lovelier than fairyland. Early morning, the sun had struck

The beds, began colouring the air crimson and purple.
One flower is deep red, the other light; some are grouped
In ranks, high or low; single and coquettish, or a hundred
Blossoms clustered into one flaming fire; some with lips

Half-opened, alluring the blossoms above, some drooping
As if weighed down with sadness; others many-hued,
Covered by awnings, enclosed with fences, sprinkled
With water, twinkling in the midday sun. Sold

To all the noble houses for transplants, peonies
Are packed with earth around the roots, carried off
By the young lords in rich apparel on fine horses,
Who go on to long hours of gay revelry, as the oriole

Trills its song above the gardens, at the close
Of the day.

An old peasant woman sighed: she saw
A bunch of lovely peonies bought for the price
That in her village twelve households bitterly pay

In yearly taxes, hungry after back-breaking toil.
Alas, alas! Their hunger was keen, their multitudinous
Slow deaths ugly: the poet saw peonies bloom
Lovelier, more fiery each year, no trace upon them

Of peasant hatred for the Emperor's sensual gardens,
In the festive, self-satisfied, corrupt city of Changan.
And what did the poet do? He wrote down the barbarity,
And the hate, & yet the ongoing ache of beauty,

In his wide-eyed unforgetting verse.

Germany, 27484

A Reproach

Each tenth month, gods leave the world.
OK, they also have a right to holidays off this rough planet.
But, ye gods, forty years now:
Ridiculous! Your shoulders to the mired wheel, please!
7584

The Razor Moralized; or, Occam's Cosmology *What fools these mortals be—Robin Goodfellow*

Two split-tailed swallows from the same nest
Got parted by chance, black arrows flying
One from a lean-to thatched hut, the other
From a proud palace in the imperial compound.

As Summer grew fierce, one day they met
By the river. The rich one was gracious, he described
The beauty and splendour at the beck of his beak,
And did not dwell on the dangers of great halls,

Draughty and subject to bouts of savage
 Destruction. The brother from thatched eaves sighed
 Comparing his cramped home, scrawny mate and brood, to
 The spaciousness of such power and glory. Yet both

(If they but knew) had built their nests in places
 Not meant for them. Not much later, Fall
 Followed: all swallows had to fly off
 South, leaving behind possessions and pride.

The fable's moral, O mortal fools? Easy: you can't take it
 With you. Enjoy what you may, it's very real; get
 Away from your allotted spot, joy is only possible
 Athwart this world and its wrong direction of time;
 Thus memories in you and of you may linger a little while; but
 Don't spend your irreversible time on wealth and power beyond
 Necessity! For a millennium, it might be worth your while, but
 Our season is too brief: too soon, all of us wend

South.

14684

The Wild Dragon's Reply

*To St. Lem, who first explained
 one could signal trains with dragons*

Our virtue is not simply a cap of horn
 And a mantle of scales, it is to inhabit a spring
 And course the sky. Our function is to worry
 Stray bones back into graves and repress
 Arrogance, to discern the limitless spaces for flying,
 Frolic in the infinite wilderness of the possibles,
 Pursue reason and effects to their bittersweet
 Ends, steadfastly regard the unending metamorphoses
 Of things as forms. Is not this the height
 Of delight? Yet you, brothers, have been lured to
 A puddle in a hoof-print, bounded by its mid-earth mire,
 Worms and leeches your company, bones from your masters'
 Table for fought-over food. Our origin and appearance

Are the same, our eager pleasures opposed. Take care,
The rulers' gains will needs and soon demand
That they mince your mortified flesh!

81084

To Brother Tao Yuan-ming, Greetings!

I live quietly, with few amusements, writing and reading, thinking of a few people and notions. The nights have now grown long. I read your drinking songs, comrade and brother. I heard what you would say today, 1600 years later: more alive after all than the wraiths I just encountered on the streets. So is our comrade Wilfred Owen, who did not live so long as the two of us, murdered like doomed cattle in that great imperialist slaughterhouse he nonetheless managed to make us see for all time. I saw that you knew him too, brother Yuan-ming. My respects to Bill and Emily also, as always, in your Elysium.

Five thousand years off the Way, people have lost heart
feelings have grown inward, like lilies they've festered
Poisoned by plunder we piddle around and do not ply loving
we snatch at pleasures but don't know how to face giving
Those that have mastery do not know mystery
who study mystery are held away from the mastery
Yet this our only body shoots by like a bolt of thunder
seventy years up and down a greased slope, O wonder:
It walks out the back door one fine morn
and there is no date set for its return.

51184

Two Uta Stories on Time* (1984-85)

1. Here We Sit Talking

When we were in our twenties, & the kalpa was young together with us, we frequently gathered in the tiny one-room house of a writer-friend of ours, in the old part of the city, on a hill-slope like an incongruously glued bird-nest. One entered by way of a flat roof, stepping onto it from a door set in the wall that bounded the zigzagging uphill pathway & as a rule well hidden under large posters and announcements. One then descended from the roof by a thoughtfully provided ladder to find oneself facing the front door. In the back part of the large room, behind an improvised cooking corner, slept the writer's baby and puppy bulldogs; the air quality can be imagined. We played cards, gossiped, joked, improvised little charades or pieces of writing, flirted, & not surprisingly stayed often until the dawn had begun to whiten the mild night.

One boring day's evening four of us sat there: Cosmas the host, his sister Anne who was a remarkable painter, an equally remarkable young woman called Evergreen who later became a famous teacher, & myself. We were telling each other anecdotes, mainly about the fugitive nature of relationships between sexes. We got to be quite melancholy and slipped into considering the swift Heraclitean flow of all things, flowing forever on but without regard to any of the ephemeral droplets, flowing away from the individuals. At this point Cosmas composed:

Here we sit talking
While life the quick flows away.
O how i would like
That in this bittersweet flow
My shapes be pleasing to you.

We all had tears in our eyes, & Evergreen wept quietly. We were young and sensitive, perhaps self-hypnotized, people thought us strange.

1284

* "Uta" is a medieval Japanese term for "poem"; thus, "uta stories" are stories (originally, from the dawn of Japanese literature), where poems flow out of non-verse texts, or vice versa.

2. So, in This Life Here

When we were young, we were also naïve. Ardently we believed in honesty, love, friendship, straight dealing between people, & a better universe to be built up with our help. I would not lose such a youth.

In our company, we had the usual share of happy, unhappy or dull loves, of tiffs and reconciliations. As far as sentiments went, Cosmas was perhaps the most fantastical of the group. Out of maximalism, or possibly out of fear of deeper commitments to other people, he always fell for the most complex and wayward situations. One Summer on the seaside, when I was staying with Cosmas in his family home on the island of Short, he met a red-haired woman with green eyes, a foreigner whose skin could not bear the slightest touch of the sun. At the same occasion I met another young woman from the same tourist group disembarked at Short, so that our stories proceeded parallel, before they diverged. I followed his flirtation: it led to a Winter meeting in the Alps, where sporting went on as much in bed at night as on the slopes by day. Cosmas later confessed to me that for the first time he was overwhelmed by passion, & he thought she was too. But his beloved (let us call her Susannah) had played her cards close to her creamy chest, except for one unexplained tear-burst at parting.

Now Susannah was not only from another country, that country was also dominated by the ironclad market universe, & its horizons were incompatible with those of our idealistic group. She turned out to be the perfect—charming and ruthless—go-getter and busybody of a world where everything, everybody's time and lives, are bought and sold. Eventually they broke up in bitter recrimination (and she ended up with a very good career in the yellow press of her rich nation, a rich husband and jealous mother-in-law, & a hobby for shooting red deer). Cosmas was deeply hurt, & wrote a number of poems where for the first time he hit off his characteristic blend of sarcasm and elegy, in order to exorcize her. Even so, he was fond of remembering how more than a year later, when he saw in front of a Bond Street shop-window the back of a petite red-haired figure, his heart skipped beats, until he realized it was not her....

Thirty years later I met Susannah again in her country, at that common friend's from the far-off golden Summer on the seaside, with whom I myself had had a less stormy encounter and a more lasting if farther-off friendship. Susannah was more beautiful and cruel than ever. Cosmas was dead by then (of cancer), the first to disappear from our group. & I realized that their relationship (that all such relationships) had to fail in this life—& yet not in every conceivable life. For, in another universe,

where she could have been socialized differently, she and Cosmas (and perhaps also I and the other foreigner woman?) might have been able to follow our bodies, who indeed thought we fit well, tightly. & I realized why I so deeply, viscerally hated the world of profit-seeking & go-getting, that maims our bodies and memories.

The ancient Japanese, I learned, allotted to the first beloved the role of giving a hand to support a newly deceased person across the threefold underground river, into the realm of the dead. Thinking over such heartbreaking events, I went back to the perspective of our starry-eyed youth, & composed a summing up for both pairs:

So, in this life here
You have left me. Who will then
Help me thru the deeps
& shallows of shadowy
Life by giving me her hand?

O Susannah!

How Can People be (Re)Presented in Fiction? Towards a Theory of Narrative Agents (1980-85)

By this time, I suppose, many a reader may wonder what can possibly be gained through this intellectual game of pigeonholing. A good deal, I venture to think.

E.H. Gombrich, *Art and Illusion*

0. I shall posit that fiction is differentiated from other forms and modes of social discourse (journalism, scientific texts, philosophy, etc.) by the presence of two necessary and sufficient formal factors: *narrative spacetime* or *chronotope*, which is a transposition and re-elaboration of preceding—largely extra-literary—concepts of space and/or time; and *narrative agents*, who are a re-elaboration and transposition of—largely extra-literary—concepts about people. These two factors are perhaps two faces of the same coin; they are certainly to a large degree consubstantial. For purposes of a first approach, I shall in this essay reluctantly but entirely forget about the chronotope, and concentrate on agents as fictional simulacra of people.

1. The Lay of the Land: the Political Stakes

1.1. Before getting into somewhat specialized and inevitably technical arguments, I want to discuss their intertext, which I tried to suggest in my title by way of the possibilities lurking within both “people” and “(re)present.” This intertext or practical context is situated at the interface between fictional and other ways of viewing, interpreting, and constructing reality.

“People” (*gens, Leute*) means, of course, something like women plus men plus children, it does not denote THE people (*le peuple, das Volk*). This essay will focus on the *images or figurations of people* rather than on the *interests of the people* that can be found (re)presented in fiction. Nonetheless, the lexical ambiguity, the confusingly overlapping connotations disturbing the neat conceptual denotations, are a very important signal. It seems reasonable to assume that the way various kinds of people are presented in literature will intimately co-determine what kinds of interests that literature might re-present. The stakes of this discussion are therefore very high—both for critics dealing with

culture, and for the fate of fiction itself. This subject can be no less than a privileged way of entering into and indicating an answer to the radical democratic and socialist question: is fiction more than opium for (the) people, is it also—as another part of this usually truncated text of Marx goes—the heart of a heartless world? Is fiction only ideology or is it also utopia and/or cognition? In other words, is there a cognitive (and therefore politically usable and ethically justifiable) reason for a radical critic to devote a major part of her life to investigating fiction—be that Shakespeare or *Dallas*, Homer or science fiction, Proust or Piercy, comic strips or Brecht? Especially when that will inevitably involve a halfway conscientious critic in the indispensable mediations of meta-meta-discourses of modern comment and criticism, and thus leave her with less and less time for more direct action?

Many radicals throughout the years have come to share with pragmatists and philistines the conclusion that there is *no* such reason, indeed, that a radical cultural critic was an oxymoron on the order of fiery ice or planned disorder. Nikolai Chernyshevsky, the leader of Russian revolutionary populism, said somewhere that sausages came before Shakespeare. From a vulgar materialist point of view this is undeniable: people cannot exist without eating, they can exist without fiction, can't they?

Ah yes, but can they? In the depths of the 1930s Depression, didn't Hollywood thrive on perverting the pennies of millions of jobless into profits from soap-opera cinema, escapist comedies, and musical spectaculars? Does not every halfway intelligent regime in economic-political difficulties buttress itself through the most popular forms of fiction at least at the same time (if not before) it tries political solutions? The genres vary: in Elizabethan times it was theatre or street-ballads; in the 19th century, popular novels; today, TV. The orientation remains constant. The Biblical author had better food-imagery than Chernyshevsky, alas: man liveth not by bread alone but also by fictional figurations—which explain why bread is or is not there, why pie in the sky will come by and by.

Let me call the operative attitude that takes Chernyshevsky's quip seriously by the name of arguably the greatest 19th-century poet, also a sympathizer of the Paris Commune, who very early on abandoned poem-writing for gun-running: it is *the Rimbaud syndrome*. I do not maintain that Che Guevara's decision that machine-guns were more important than speeches, or Mao Zedong's that working with or in people's actions was more important than working in poems, were wrong decisions *in themselves*: that would be both ignorant and presumptuous. I do maintain that when the Rimbaud syndrome is adopted as a norm

imposed on all possible future Rimbauds, it is pernicious. For, we cultural specialists have a good deal of historical irony to fall back upon. Thus, Chernyshevsky's main influence was not in his failed revolutionary action but in his writings, in particular in a fictional text called *What Is To Be Done?* (1865), which 40 years later inspired a young man called Volodya Ulyanov to write a non-fictional text of the same title, setting out the theory of a future revolutionary party (some of us would believe this was very good and some very bad, but few would say it was ineffective). The ways of the Lord are indeed mysterious: 10 years after the second *What Is To Be Done?*, its author, then already called Lenin, would interrupt his possibly most important and certainly most utopian piece of wordsmithing (called *The State and the Revolution*) with a concluding statement that "it is more pleasing to make a revolution than write about it." What I'm arguing here is not at all that he was wrong but that he was (necessarily) oversimplifying: that without Chernyshevsky's fiction as well as Chernyshevsky's organisational tradition (which led to Ulyanov's elder brother being executed by the Tsarist government) many central features of the theory and practice of Leninism would not have existed in the form in which they came to exist. And one among the things we can learn from looking at fiction and art in general—which, as Hegel argued throughout his *Aesthetics*, fuses conceptualization with sensuality—is that existents only exist in given forms: *not to exist in a given way* means *not to exist*, period. If Ulyanov had gone on to make a system, it would have been another animal.

I would argue that a large part of what survives of people—my or your dead parents or famous figures—are narrative figurations, agents with actions. For example, Che Guevara survives as something like a Marxist version of an Arthurian or Spenserian Knight of Justice giving his life for the cause, a revolutionary Christ-like intercessor for the oppressed. This figure is so potent that even Hollywood felt compelled to attempt co-opting and neutralizing it in that unspeakable 1969 movie *Che!* I hope I shall not be taken as saying that the practice of fiction is better than the *praxis* of revolutionary change, but merely that it is indispensable for and indispensably allied with it. For better or worse, fiction or narrative (in the wide sense of telling a story with agents and space/time, which includes equally what the old theories called epic, lyric, and drama) is inextricably enmeshed with all social practice. This is not to deny that the Rimbaud syndrome remains a very important and open particular historical question. But it too is an important question because, before the gun-running, Rimbaud had an unsurpassed way with words, in his case organized into verse narratives.

1.2. It might have become apparent that my title conceals what seem to me some basic choices. Side by side with the resonance between people (plural) and the people (collective singular), another, much more polarized choice is whether either or any of them are being—are to be—“REE-presented” or “repreSENTed,” “or indeed perhaps simply “presented”?

REE-presenting I take to refer to a supposed copying from a supposedly otherwise known external reality by means of a reflection of that reality. Two minutes’ thought suffices to render this untenable in any literal form, so that it is then quickly provided with a codicil to the effect that a subjective prism is of course interposed between the objective reality and the figure of (the) people. However, it then inevitably turns out that a norm for the rightness of that prismatic refraction must be found in order to obviate the possible multiplicity of prisms (say avantgardist or mystical as against “realistic”), and that the normative prism is that of the ruling ideology—be it socialist-realism or the awful capitalist-realism we can see in the halls of most US universities or corporations as paintings of presidents and board chairmen. This, in short, is a static, conformist, Philistine theory of artistic mimesis, banal and without much interest.

However, if people are represented in fiction as a selection, condensation, and displacement of surface empirical events and the ruling ideological way of seeing them, if they are seen as in a partially steerable daydream, then representation or mimesis is not to be understood as simple copying. Representation in fiction is then a process of taking model-figures of people from non-fictional ways of understanding and of constructing social reality into a process that (in ideal cases) develops roughly as follows: the new figures go about subverting the heretofore received fictional norms of agential structuring; but as this is happening, the figures themselves are in turn modified in and by some autonomous principles of fictional structuring; all of which together enables the resulting views of relationships among people, elaborated by the restructured piece of fiction, to return into our understanding of reality or ideology *with a cognitive increment*; this better understanding permits then what Brecht called intervening, effective, or engaged thinking (in the technical sense of meshing or being in gear). For Brecht, an image, model or effigy of a person can be drawn up, into which might be inserted attitudes that the person observed might not have found by him/herself: “these imputed ways of behaviour do not, however, remain the observer’s illusions; they become realities: The effigy has become productive, it can change the depicted one, it contains (practicable) proposals. To make such an effigy is called loving” (Brecht,

GW 20:168-70). The great Brechtian and indeed Marxian theme of a productive or creative eros has been formulated before and better than in all the privatized *jouissances*.

At this point the mimetic ambiguity of “representing” (which dominates present-day views) should probably be abandoned for the more productive and communicative, two-way duplicity of “presenting”: presenting figures taken from outside fiction into it as propositions or formative hypotheses for a narrative, but also presenting figures transmogrified within fiction as proposals to the pragmatic world. Even in the best case, representing suggests standing in for something that already exists. Presenting may in the best, Brechtian case suggest instead erotic increment and plasticity. The roundabout route of art and fiction could thus hide an operativity (usually not immediate but long-range), an intervention or use-value, after all. That it does so, and that a horizon can be indicated within which it does so, is the argument of this essay. For if it did not, if people *cannot* be represented in fiction, a great part of the humanist and radical passion which is inalienably allied to a need of changing people’s lives, of modifying the relationships among people, would be irrelevant to fiction, and fiction would indeed be irrelevant to it. If people do not fit (in however autonomous ways) into the worlds of fiction, then fiction does not fit into the world of people.

1.3. I shall conclude this introduction by an operative definition: Narrative agents can be in a first approximation defined as *all nouns or nominal syntagms that can be imagined as independent entities potentially able to influence the course of action in a narrative’s imaginary universe or possible world* (in contrast to the objects). However many central questions this still begs, it seems sufficient for a first approach. The necessary linguistic and semiotic elements in this definition function within a “possible world” whose structures are largely borrowed from practical life. In other words, wherever not expressly modified by new propositions, the presuppositions of given ideological ways of understanding everyday reality are retained in narratives. Narrative agents therefore *both* derive their traits from adjectivized cultural commonplaces and value judgments (such as brave, miserly, amorous) *and* structure the traits differently from empirical practice for the purposes of a better cognitive overview.

2. *For a Sociohistorical Semiotics of Narrative Agents*

What does anyone tell me by saying “Now I see it as....”? What consequences has this information? What can I do with it?

L. Wittgenstein

2.0. The study of narrative agents is seriously underdeveloped. It labors under two grave disadvantages, two faces of underdevelopment. First, it is still largely naively impressionistic and positivistic. In the 1920s the very well informed Bakhtin noted bitterly that this field was in “a complete chaos”:

... character, type, *personnage*, story hero, the famed classification of scenic *emplois*: the lover (lyrical, dramatical), the reasoner, the simpleton, etc.,—all such classifications and determinations of the *geroi* [Bakhtin’s term for something like a narrative agent, DS] are given no common basis or common denominator, nor is there a unified principle extant for their reasoned ordering. Usually the classifications are uncritically contaminated to boot.... (10-11)

More than half a century later, it was received wisdom (cf. Chatman) that there were scandalous blanks in even a theory of surface-level agents (the characters), where the latest advance was E.M. Forster’s distinctions from 1928, notably between round and flat characters. Thus, the illusionistic confusion of narrative agents and people from everyday life is still very much with us. Second, in the last 20 years there has appeared a symmetrical obverse of positivistic empiricism, the abstract apriorism of deducing agents from eternal psycho-biological structures sundered from social history. I shall sketch in a critique of these two main obverse theories and offer my own proposals for a socio-formal theory of agential analysis centred on the key category of “type,” as well as for some possibilities of its application to textual agents in general, including characters. This might lead to some provisional answers to the question posed in my title.

2.1. Culler has rightly noted that “Character is the major aspect of the novel to which structuralism has paid least attention and has been least successful in treating” (230). The dead end of the *structuralisant*, scientific semiotics and narratology is nowhere clearer than precisely in agential theory. Apart from Bakhtin and Lukács, isolated figures slighted

where they came from and for a long time also in bourgeois cultural criticism, systematic work in it began in the wake of Lévi-Strauss, with the works of Greimas and the *Communications* authors. In my longer essay (Suvín, “Can People”) I proceed to a lengthy survey and critique of its first and still most authoritative system, the one developed by Greimas.

I begin by arguing for a different articulation of the depth level of narrative functions, and then at more length for a different, “pragmatic” nature and hierarchy of the other levels. For, already Aristotle’s *ethos* vs. *práttos*, and Propp’s *dramatis persona* vs. function, had clearly distinguished between two levels of agents. The first of them is to be read off immediately from the lexical or surface elements of the text; the second is not, but is to be found by further analysis, and it is therefore called meta-textual. Both authors stressed that the level which was more general and abstract (the meta-textual), was creatively—that is, practically as well as theoretically—strategic and more important. After them, Souriau worked out—even underneath the opposite pole of Individualist dramaturgy of the last four centuries in Paris—six “dramaturgic functions”: the Thematic Force, the Value or Wished-for Good, the Beneficiary (of that Good), the Adversary, the Arbiter (who attributes the Good), and the Helper. Both Propp and Souriau were also perfectly clear about the possibility of distributing participation in meta-textual agents among several textual ones as well as about the obverse possibility: thus, whether the magical object given to a hero be one horse or a ring out of which issue three youths, this will always represent the Helper.

Greimas attempted a more consistent formalization. But in the process he lost Propp’s strengths based in historical feedback, and misused him by transferring the debate onto the domain of universalist syntax. I cannot enter here into a discussion of his depth level of agential functions, except to repeat that “Greimas offers little evidence how this model [of actants] would work in practice” (Culler 234). His central drawback is a reliance on the very peculiar Hjelmslevian linguistics as his epistemology, believing it authorises him to found the actantial model in *the* syntactic structure of natural languages, equated with *the* organization of human imagination. This is a cognitively improper sleight-of-hand. Obviously, a formal system is defined by its signs not having any independent meaning outside the system, so that, in order to speak about anything, in a second moment a meaning must be found for them. Thus, whenever Greimas is analyzing actual narrative texts, he finds that deductive and universalist syntax is insufficient, and he has to supplement it with semantics: a crack through which the social

history of people's relationships with each other and with the world of things oozes partially and inconsistently back. His analyses of a group of Lithuanian folktales in *Du Sens* (1983) required a Proppian recourse to the specific social semantics and indeed pragmatics of authority. In brief, the ideological horizon of this "glossocracy" contradicts actual scholarly necessity.

In fact, a word, text, shape, color, etc., can become a sign only in a *signifying situation*; it has no "natural" meaning outside of it. This situation is constituted by the relation between signs and their users; a user can take something to be a sign only as it is spatiotemporally concrete and localized, and as it relates to the user's disposition toward potential action; both the concrete localization and the user's disposition are always socio-historical. Furthermore, they postulate a reality organized not only around the signs but also around the subjects. The entry of potentially acting subjects reintroduces acceptance and choice, temporal genesis and mutation, and a possibility of dialectical negation into the frozen constraints of syntax. In other words, linguistics cannot be its own epistemology, because no natural language can be wholly formalized without incurring semantic contradictions. Therefore, linguistics cannot and does not provide the criteria valid for every type of cognition but on the contrary needs itself to be justified by an epistemology external to it. While the conceptual rigor of linguistics is admirable, when sundered from social verisimilitude and historical semantics it easily leads to "a rigorous irrelevance" (Culler 257). The most useful course, then, seems to be a return to a non-individualist widening and grounding of Souriau's narrative functions. I am translating his articulation into the more historical and theatre-based vocabulary of—as I propose—the independent functions of Protagonist, Antagonist, Value, Mandator, Beneficiary, and the dependent function of Satellite.

Nonetheless, Greimas addressed the crucial dilemma in studying narratives: into which system must a text be integrated in order to become meaningful, that is, such that an interpreter may explain it? Positivism had answered this by putting its object simply into a quantitatively larger set of texts (an author's opus, a genre tradition, etc.). Structuralism was right to react against this in the direction of qualitatively different levels of analysis. But Structuralism was wrong in radically sundering deductive and formal cognition (a self-sufficient, closed system of signs) from experiential cognition based on reference to the extra-signic reality of social bodies—in sundering texts radically from the rest of human experience. In cultural studies, Structuralism's answer—to apply to the investigated text a "grammar of narration"—explains texts as a function of a universal structure of the human (or, in Greimas, Indo-European?)

mind, as evidenced in language. Both Positivism and Structuralism bypass the actual historical situations in culture, its *pragmatic hierarchy*. Cultural texts may be analyzed into cognitive levels only by seeing how those levels are intimately molded by precise societal values and tensions.

2.2. At this point it would be possible to inventory at length a number of contributions to a definition and delimitation of the third, intermediate level of agential analysis.¹ Beside Aristotle, Propp, Souriau, Bakhtin, and Lévi-Strauss, the attempt at such a delimitation should re-evaluate the use of agents in the Marxian tradition, from his own *Eighteenth Brumaire* and similar writings on historical action, to Brecht and Benjamin. It should also critically sift and integrate the extant contributions of the Structuralists (Barthes, Todorov, Greimas, Rastier, Hamon, Chatman, etc.) and of some other precursors, perhaps best represented by Sorin Alexandrescu's monograph on William Faulkner (1969), which finds in his opus the *rôles* of Indian, Black, mulatto, farmer, aristocrat, Yankee, businessman, and intellectual. However, I shall content myself with acknowledging that I used hints from many such authors in order to construct the following table of my own. I shall close this part with brief comments on it, hoping that for the rest it will be mainly self-explanatory, and then discuss the central category of type.

It would be possible to comment on many aspects of this table, but it should be stressed first of all that the agential levels are cumulative and not exclusive. The two basic ones—actants and types—are to be found in every fictional text, while the uppermost one—characters—may or may not be present in any given text (this depends entirely on its historical epoch and literary genre). This points to the key function of the second or intermediate level of *types*, on which I shall focus here.

Various scholars have used various ad hoc terms for it: figure, role, *emploi*, etc. I would not favour "role" in French or English because it invites confusion both with an actor's role in the theatre and with the sociological theory of role-playing. On the contrary, "type" is not only suitably Anglo-French but it could draw useful sustenance from a confrontation with its wide use in criticism in literature, and in theatre from the tradition which can draw on such associations as "type of role," "typecast," "stock types," etc. In particular, it would be necessary to confront here Lukács's pioneering use, symmetrically inverse to the Formalists and Structuralists, of terms such as "typical character." In the essay mentioned in footnote 1, my conclusion was that Lukács's

¹ I have gone into this at length in Suvin "Can People"; in particular, on Lukács also in another eponymous essay, and cross-checked for another cultural sphere in "Fiction."

Table 1

Agential Level	Predicative Articulation	Narratological Locus	Verbal Status, Deep Structure	Visualizing Status	Definition	Historical Duration
3. <i>Character</i> <i>personage</i> or <i>personage- personne</i> ; “round”; presence not obligatory	A great (though not unlimited) number of predi- cates/traits, at least two of them conflict	Always textual and a dramatis persona (when it exists)	<i>Proper name</i> ; d. str. = illusion of large number of not fully fixed attributes, only imperfectly re- trievable from text + all contexts	Necessarily figurative (de- pictable); necessarily individual	Individuality as presupposed by bourgeois practices (e.g., economics) and ideology (e.g., psychology)	Almost point- like, changeable for each differ- ent ensemble of spectators
2. <i>Type</i> <i>type</i> or <i>person- age-type</i> ; “flat,” e.g., Vice, Panta- lone, Miser, Father, Soubrette; <i>presence</i> <i>obligatory</i>	A small number —usually 2-6—of compatible predi- cates/traits	Metatextual or textual, according to whether level 3 exists or not	<i>Common</i> or <i>generic</i> <i>noun</i> , including proper name raised to that status; d. str. = noun+one or a few attributes, or normal syntagma	Necessarily figura- tive; not necessarily individual	Societal type, by age+sex+pro- fession, and/or social group, and/or tempera- ment	<i>Courte durée</i> ; generations or centuries
3. <i>Actant</i> Protagonist, Antagonist, Value, Mandator, Beneficiary, and Satellite; <i>presence</i> <i>obligatory</i>	One predicate as common denomi- nator or a bundle of semic predicates	Always metatex- tual; no discrete appearance as dramatis persona	<i>Common noun</i> ; d. str. = surface (=“force which does what is indicated by the noun”)	Not necessarily figurative; neces- sarily not individual	Function in dra- matic action	<i>Longue durée</i> ; epochs or mil- lennia

“Left” ethical passion, philosophical depth, and historical richness were at odds with his frequent “Right” ontology, epistemology, and aesthetics, so that parts of his work remain classical, but its theoretical skeleton needs large-scale refunctioning.

2.3. Type itself is, then, perhaps best defined as in Whewell (and Balzac and Engels): “A type is *an example of any class*, for instance, a species of a genus, *which is considered as eminently possessing the characters of the class*.” (9) This means that such a typicality gains its authority from the specific sociohistorical intertext, its horizon and premises. It can and must be based on *any* categorization that has been taken in cultural history (rightly or wrongly from a present-day point of view) to classify people or agents. It will, then, include as important historical cases biblical and other theological typologies as well as Lukács’s politico-economic one, but it will certainly embrace a larger domain. Thus, types can be and have been classified by sex-cum-age, nationality, profession, social estate or class, physiology and moral philosophy (Aristotle’s *ethos*, the Galenic “temperaments” or “humours”), often by what we would feel are combinations of these categories (Diderot’s *conditions*, for example Father or Judge, seem to contaminate profession, class, and social role), etc.

In that light, the very useful term “emploi” or “stock character,” “stock figure” or “line (of business)” —for example *ingénue*, *jeune premier*, *père noble*, *raisonneur*, villain, heavy, walking gentleman — is a particular though historically crucial case of my “type”: a type with supplementary theatrico-historical codification, and one that has largely survived the rise of my level 3 (the character), though at the price of retreat from the textual surface.

To give just one example: the agential semantic field of “warrior/warring” may be articulated as an ideal (but also largely historical) sequence traversing the scale of predicative complexity indicated by column 2 in the Table. At its lower end would be found a mythological personification of War or Ares/ Mars in Antiquity, or an analogous agent in theatre outside Europe (for example, the Peking Opera), or an allegorical personification such as the medieval Ira (Wrath). All such agents are predicatively poor (though not at all necessarily ineffective) *types*, since they have, I think, two traits only: the warlike characteristic (wrathfulness, aggressiveness) and the relational position or *Stellenwert* in the system of polytheism, cardinal sins, or something similar. The *Commedia dell’arte* “Capitano,” derived from the Roman *miles gloriosus*, has already about half a dozen traits, say: officer, middle-aged, braggart, coward, indigent, and Spanish (the ethnic trait varies

according to local history and prejudice). It seems to me constitutive of any type that it possess a relatively small number of traits (I have not found more than half a dozen in any so far examined), which are all *culturally congruent or compatible*. This compatibility should be explainable in every particular historical case as the result of a feedback interaction between the social definition of reality from which the traits are taken and the criteria of verisimilitude shared by the audience for which the stage narration is intended.

A whole historical typology of narrative agents and their various levels could and remains to be done on the basis of the hypothesis tabulated above. If this proved fruitful, it could serve as a beacon for research into narratological agents in general, from mythological tales through the Individualist novel to the present.

2.4. Let me now introduce some other lines of reasoning which speak in favor of finding types in all fictional narrative—on the textual surface or underneath the characters of Individualism. Northrop Frye puts this succinctly and stimulatingly:

All lifelike characters, whether in drama or fiction, owe their consistency to the appropriateness of the stock type which belongs to their dramatic function. That stock type is not the character but it is as necessary to the character as a skeleton is to the actor who plays it. (172)

Other post-Individualistic critics of diverse persuasions have noted that in any given culture there exist mental stereotypes, what Kant called “schematisms,” for given concepts-cum-images represented in art (and, generally, used in social practice). In Auden’s poem “The Truest Poetry Is the Most Feigning”, the oscillatory problem of the poet-lover between empirical reality and fiction implying a reading frame is—I think, very realistically—addressed as follows (*italics mine*):

The living girl’s *your* business (some odd sorts
Have been an inspiration to men’s thoughts):
...
We cannot love your love till she take on,
Through you, the wonders of a paragon....

These mental schematisms are most palpably demonstrable in painting, and they have been persuasively demonstrated by Ernst Gombrich’s copious analyses. All painting, he argues, comports the interaction of

such schematisms in the painter's mind with the possible innovations (which go from zero in, say, ancient Egypt to the continuous care about strengthening the impression of mimetism in 19th century). All thinking passes necessarily through "sorting, classifying. All perceiving relates to expectations and therefore to comparisons" (301). A useful philosophical collocation for such classifying schematisms is to say, in the medieval tradition, that they partake of *universalia* such as (to give pictorial examples also valid for literature and theatre) the Young Man, the Temptress, etc. In this view, no painterly motif can be truly seen—that is, not only optically registered on the retina but also made into a culturally comprehensible unit—"unless one has learned how to classify and catch it within the network of a schematic form" (Gombrich 73). The motif is not necessarily—is usually not—*exhausted* by being subsumed under a class of generic stereotypes, but unless this first identification is effected to begin with, the motif as motif will simply not exist for an audience, which will then see merely unrelated figures or indeed blotches of paint. Even the notoriously "realistic" Dutch genre-painting "created from a limited number of TYPES AND GESTURES, much as the apparent realism of the picaresque novel or of Restoration comedy still applies and modifies STOCK FIGURES which can be traced back for centuries" (Gombrich 87, caps DS). Thus, even the individualized character, if and when present in a narrative, will gain its full significance when seen within the network of, or—better—as arising out of a more general level, the level of types. As Culler notes:

... our cultural codes contain models [of various stock figures]:
 ... the *senex iratus* or heavy father, the *miles gloriosus* or braggart, the fop or coxcomb, the pedant.... [T]hese models guide the perception and creation of characters, enabling us to
 ... attribute to each an intelligible role. (Culler 236)

This is, of course, quite consonant with the basic theoretical approach of semiotics. For, in semiotic theory, all imaginatively visualized elements of narration, including textual agents, do not signify their supposed mimetic equivalents from life: for example, characters do not signify people from the street. Instead, an agent signifies the *class of entities* of which it is a member: the *primary* condition of a narrative agent too is to be "representative of its class, so that the audience is able to infer from it the presence of another member of the same class ... in the [imagined narrative] world" (Elam 8). This explains also all the mimetically unexplainable "non-literal signifiers" in the agential domain, such as the two-dimensional cut-outs in Piscator's *Schweik* (1929), the

dishonest statesman in Chinese theatre signified by the blue *mang* robe he wears, or any sufficiently non-mimetically presented—for example masked—agents. Thus, the upper-class characters in Brecht's *Caucasian Chalk Circle* performance do not represent people who in medieval Transcaucasia went around masked: on the contrary, they metaphorize or signify the *typical* quality of that class, the “suppression of their human face” or impulse, such as motherliness, under the sway of the power and splendor inscribed in the masks. (This whole matter of masks and masking warrants special investigation as, I think, a theoretically crucial point in agential analysis.) Analogously, the seemingly “realistic” stage figure of Galileo does not centrally stand for either the historical or any other imaginatively modified individual who had such-and-such a biography, but for a parabolic type one can perhaps call “the great but socially flawed scientist” (cf. Suvin, “Brecht’s”; also for an extra-European case “Fiction”). In parables and similar allegorical or quasi-allegorical genres—that is, in almost all the literary and art genres before the rise of Individualism—the particular, surface vehicle always intimately interacts with the universal, depth tenor. This holds also for their agents: types are always at or near their surface.

In sum, as a general philosophical proposition, any “unrepeatably individual” feature can only be recognized and analyzed within some net of general concepts and categories. “The ‘individual’ phenomenon in art does not testify to the lack of a system but to the intersection of several diverse systems in one single point.” (Lotman and Uspenskij xxxvi). A character can only be understood in dialectical interrelationship with historical concepts and categories of types, which shape the norms of agential verisimilitude shared by the author and his/her social addressee.

3. Some Indications for Situating “Character”

3.1. Discussion at book length would be required for a rigorous verification of a useful historico-cultural theory of narrative agents. For, if the hypothesis developed earlier is correct, then the answer to the question regarding which agential level is to be found on the surface of a text and which in the presuppositions or depths of a text—that is, what is textual and what meta-textual—is neither single nor eternal. It is not given once and for all by the structure of the human brain or unconscious and/or by a universal syntax: on the contrary, it is a *changing* answer, and the changes are based on dominant aspects of sociohistorical relationships between people of which and to which that text speaks. Such changes

happen, no doubt, within a *longue durée* measured in epochs, yet they are nonetheless part and parcel of the major, “geological” shifts in historical human relations. The one clear—and quite sufficient—instance of such a wholly new narrative level is the rise of the Individualist *character* in the period between Boccaccio, Shakespeare, Cervantes, and Molière, in whose works its coming into being can be traced. Of course, this does not mean that agents with conflicting and sufficiently numerous traits—that is, characters—cannot be found before or outside the European 14th or 16th century. Basic epistemological shifts in a culture and in social practice come neither overnight nor out of nowhere. But in European art, literature, and theatre from the Middle Ages on, it seems as clear as can be desired that the deviation from *universalia* toward individuality “is a comparatively recent development” (Gombrich 148). Character in the Individualist sense was born together with the bourgeoisie, capitalist money economy, economic rationality, atomization, quantification, and reification of human relationships including equality before the law, and the whole well-known historical cluster accompanying the rise of this new paradigm. It is the fictional equivalent of private property in economic production and circulation, of independent individuals in the market “who are the possessors of commodities ... [and who] place themselves in relation to one another as persons whose will resides in these objects” (Marx 178).

To verify this in terms of dramaturgic agents (see Table): the *kind* or *category of behaviour*—though not necessarily the concrete behaviour itself—of a type (as explained in section 3, for example a *miles gloriosus* or a La Bruyère *caractère*), is wholly predictable. As different from type, a *character* a) must possess more than about half a dozen traits, b) of which at least two are eventually found to be contradictory or otherwise incompatible. In a character, then, the precise kind of behaviour is *not* wholly predictable. In that sense, this character or *personnage-personne* is an upstart and newfangled kind of agent. It is limited not only by epoch but also by genre—for example the psychological novel and “well-made play” as against fairy tale, paraliterature, and most of the avantgarde of the 20th Century—which in this hypothesis is the beginning of the post-Individualist epoch.

To avoid misunderstandings, I shall add that none of my arguments have spoken to the historical necessity and value (or otherwise) of the rise of Individualistic character. My provisional opinion is that the rise of the character as an agential level (just as the rise of its economic and social analogues and bearers, the market and the bourgeoisie) has brought great advantages as well as great limitations. The advantages were principally apparent during the ascending historical phase, in Europe

say up to Balzac, George Eliot, and Tolstoy. In that phase, the character was the agential formulation of the freedom to break through the consensual constraints of hierarchically frozen social types and dogmatic normative systems—connected with despotic monarchism and a stagnant subsistence economy—toward larger horizons of life. The multiplication of traits and their conflictuality, the illusion of agential “roundness” and “three-dimensionality,” connoted that human agents and actions were not explained, foreseen, and fixed once and for all. Their richness allowed these freshly conceived agents to slip through the insufficient, clumsy and restrictive, net of old *universalia*. In particular, the highly significant chronotopic analogs to this new structure of agents should also be investigated: where the types were timeless and set against a fixed background, so that they pretended to eternal and ubiquitous validity, a character can and does evolve in time and environment. But all such aspects turn into their contraries with the contraction and exhaustion of Individualism in our century. On the one hand, the price of its particular kind of freedom begins to weigh more heavily than its achievements as the bourgeoisie shifts from personal competition to fictitious corporative “individualities”; on the other hand, this shift as well as the failure (so far) of radical alternatives to bourgeois rule threatens all freedom in the sense of enlarging possibilities of life, bringing about new monopolistic and stereotype-producing networks—the Leviathans of states, corporations, armies, culture industry, etc.

3.2. Let me then take, at the end, only the trajectory of one typologically and probably historically coherent sequence, that whose extreme ends would be the allegorical figure of Avarice (in a hypothetical Morality play) and a realistic miser, say Balzac’s Gobseck. “Avarice” has two traits: the homonymous predicate, and its *Stellenwert* in the system of sins. In a Renaissance or post-Renaissance type they expand into roughly half a dozen: Pantalone (a type who is also by theatrical convention physically over-coded into a Commedia dell’Arte *Maschera* with a narrow range of looks and behaviors) can be characterized by the traits “merchant,” “old,” “male,” “Venetian,” “amorous,” and last but not least “miserly.” Without that last predicate and trait, there would be no Pantalone: that is what dooms his amorous ventures to failure and makes him a permanent comic butt. Equally, however, it is the new fusion of this trait with the unambiguous class identification of Venetian merchant that makes for a both recognizable and immensely popular hyperbole of “a precise historical function, as a representative of an industrious bourgeoisie,” —“the satire of commercial power” (Pandolfi 176, 180). The biological age of Pantalone is highly significant: the fact that there

is no type of the *young* merchant before bourgeois drama, though well-known in everyday life, and even in prose fiction from the *Novellino* and Boccaccio on, shows that the physical coding is an ideological hyperbole, a plebeian (sometimes aristocratic) adverse judgment on the vitality of a new class, paradigm, way of behaving—in short, of a new *type*. One step further, and we are at Molière's Harpagon, who has a similar ideological profile but is already part of the way from type to character (though not quite a contradictory character), probably by way of contamination of several types. The watershed toward character is passed in Shylock, and precisely in his speech “Hath not a Jew eyes?...” (III.i): there is no type, I think, who can see himself simultaneously through the eyes of antagonists and through his own interiority, since this provides a union of contradictory traits *par excellence*. Though Shylock may for long stretches be a type, he is no longer only or primarily such; the same would hold for Richard 3 as against the Medieval Vice. Finally, the usurers and misers of realism such as Gobseck draw their strength from the interplay of characterological richness and the steel backbone of the old type, never totally buried beneath the surface of Individualistic character.

Indeed, it is remarkable that characters—verbally bound up with a proper name—can revert to social typing and turn their name into a common or generic noun simply by adding an article or a suffix. To stick with Molière, Tartuffe became “les Tartuffes” already in his first *placet* to the King; Don Juan turns into “donjuanism” or “*Les Don Juans de village*” (title of a play) as readily as Tartuffe does into “a tartuffe” or into “*tartufferie*.” This measures the oftentimes small distance between the character and type levels in much literature ever since Molière: in dramaturgy, it is enough to mention the melodrama (that matrix of all Romantic plays), the vaudeville, or even the boulevard comedy whose art consists precisely in pasting the newest traits of the marketplace on the good old masks—a *Commedia dell'arte* inverted, so to speak. As for modern drama, say from Jarry and Chekhov to Brecht and Genet, it would not be too difficult to show that part of its strength consists in ironically violating those same type expectations hidden behind the characters. In Brecht's *Mutter Courage und ihre Kinder* they are: the *miles gloriosus* for Eilif, the *ingénue* for Kattrin, the *niais*, *benêt* or simpleton for Swiss Cheese, and of course the miserly merchant for Courage herself.

4. *In Lieu of Conclusion*

In sum, I have here argued two aspects. First, that to understand narrative agents it is necessary to take into account the interaction within each between the three levels of 1) *actantial function*, 2) sociohistorical way of categorizing people or *type*, and often also 3) the particular—individual but no less sociohistorical—*characterization*. In this interaction, hegemonies will shift between the three levels according to given historical periods (as well as given analytical goals). Second, I have argued that the most formalizing analysis can become precise, instead of formalistic, only in feedback with the sociohistorical actuality of the field under scrutiny. That is why, instead of a “pure,” technocratic and idealistic birth of agential theory (or indeed semiotics) from the spirit of syntax, I pleaded for this feedback or blend. This could add the dialectics of historic mutability to the mechanistic atomism of the Formalists or the computerized statics of the Structuralists, and neutralize their respective metaphysics. Thus we would have a good chance to understand *how* simulacra of people in literature and the arts speak to actually obtaining relationships between people in the author’s and the reader’s period.

However, more than any particular, much less a fashionable, method of narrative and cultural analysis is here at stake. As I argued in Part 1, the reply to my title question is hugely important. What, then, is the reply? I hope my argumentation may have been useful in leading toward two conclusions. First: empirical individuals, “living people” in the bourgeois Individualist sense CANNOT be represented in fiction. They necessarily become on the one hand *exempla* (Auden’s paragons), and on the other hand shifting nodes of narration. Nonetheless, and second: pertinent and crucial *relationships among people* CAN be represented in fiction. In fact, fiction *consists in* their representation and reformulation. This allows the reader to pleurably verify old and dream up new, alternative relationships: to *re-articulate* (in both senses of the word) human relationships to the world of people and things. As Aristotle argued in *Politics*, humans necessarily live in a community (*polis*), we are “political animals.” Thus, all central human relations are, in this widest sense, political. Significant fictional re-presentation of relations among people rearticulates our political relationships.

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13 Parables from the Warring States Period (1984-87)

Appetite and Preying

The Dragon King came down to Earth and changed into a fish to frolic in a river. A fisherman in need took out his trident and wounded him in the eye. Deeply offended at this injustice, the Dragon King flew off to complain to the Emperor of Heaven.

“When the fisherman threw his trident, he saw you as a fish,” was the Emperor’s verdict. “You have no claim against him.”

“So I cannot blame this person for treating me as his prey?” asked the indignant Dragon King.

“Not on this world, where sheep must become mortified mutton before they can be of use for appeasing hunger, so that men and wolves must turn into predators,” rejoined the Emperor of Heavens sadly. “How else can appetite be satisfied except by gobbling up and destroying a creature, by taking away its identity?”

“What is my alternative then?” asked the crestfallen Dragon King. “Can I frolic in rivers from now on only as a dragon?”

“You could, of course, choose a different world for your watery frolics,” advised the Emperor. “Why don’t you go to one of the Aldebaran planets? There the natives are more civilized. They satisfy their hunger by sharing identities in mutual delight, a feat Earth had at the time of one-celled amoebas but has since forgotten.”

“Indeed I shall,” mumbled the Dragon King “what a good idea! Even among the strange multi-celled bipeds of Earth I heard some hints about such an appetite, not reduced to preying. It is not only safer, it must be much nicer!”

* Some of these parables have been stimulated by, and all have been influenced by the attitudes of classical Chinese tales, which they are variations on, usually counter-projections to.

Use Value and Exchange Value

A poor couple lived in the state of Lu. The husband, a cobbler, made very good shoes, and the wife was a skilful weaver of silk for hats. Yet they sold very little, and lived from hand to mouth. The husband tried different kinds of hides, he even changed the form of the shoes. The wife watched over mulberries, shooing away caterpillars, watering and fertilizing the trees to get the choicest leaves and produce the best-fed silkworms. Nothing availed. They became desperate.

One day they went to see the Sage Ah Meng, newly arrived on his wanderings with his friend Fu Wen. "We each have a special skill," they told him. "We take great pains to constantly maintain and hone it. Why then don't people want what we do?"

"True, each of you has a good skill," Ah Meng replied. "But you don't realize that the people of your state prefer going barefoot and don't even like shoes. They don't care to care for their bodies. They let their hair grow long and matted, they let their face become sunburned and raw, they consider hats a luxury. How will you sell your shoes and hats in such a state? Why don't you try to change the habits of your fellow-countrymen?"

Some time later, the state of Lu, thoroughly demoralized, fell prey to nomadic riders. When he heard that, Fu Wen hoped the couple of craftsmen had left in time. But his friend Ah Meng was sour. Fu Wen reflected, and acknowledged that, had this been possible, it would have been better to change the habits of their countrymen than to let the state go under: "But they couldn't have done it alone. They'd have needed to find or found a guild of shoemakers and hatmakers. Or at least, of shoe-friends and hat-friends, who could have become wearers of shoes and hats. Then, had they succeeded in that, they should not have left at any price!"

The Legend of a Lasting Banquet

In Jin, Fu Wen was told this legend:

Yen Hsuefu was a slave. Master Mo redeemed him from bondage, fed him well, and took him home in his personal carriage. He showed him the required courtesy, he even asked Yen to sit in the honoured guest seat. When they arrived home, Mo jumped off the carriage and went inside without a word. Yen Hsuefu was hurt by this and decided to go away.

Master Mo asked him to stay: "I hardly know you at all. You have been a slave for nine years. When I saw you, I redeemed you. You were

hungry, I fed you abundantly. On our ride, I treated you very well. Isn't that enough?"

"To be slighted by people who do not recognize my worth does not count, but I expect more from a person who understands me. Yes, I was a slave for nine years. My owner didn't understand me, so I could bear it; but when you redeemed me and treated me so well, I thought you would be the one who understood me. Yet as we arrived at your house and everyday cares overwhelmed you, you simply walked away. My position now is in a way not so different from when I was a slave. Soon, I see, I may go hungry again. If I'm to remain a slave, I can be one anywhere, but it will hurt less if I go away."

"Up to now," Master Mo replied, "I only knew your outer semblance. Now I know you also have a pure mind. The proverb says 'If one is able to repent and change, one's past mistakes may be forgiven'. I am sincerely willing to correct my attitude. Will you please not desert me?"

Thereupon, Mo ordered that the reception hall be swept and that a feast be set in honour of Yen Hsuefu. Yen had something to say about this too: "I truly don't deserve this either. I will accept it as a testimony to your magnanimity."

Often parted on pressing business, Yen and Master Mo remained nonetheless fast friends from then on. They contrived to meet at least once, and sometimes twice a year. Whoever was at the time more prosperous always gave a huge feast.

Hearing this tale, the Sage Fu Wen sighed in admiration: "What great-souled people they had in olden times! They told unpleasant truths, they did not get offended at truth-tellers; most importantly, they mended mistakes! Is such virtuous behaviour and dear love of comrades still possible today?"

The Sternest Teacher

Wang Anshi was a famous statesman and poet. Retired, out of favour, he decided to compile his collected works, and set about correcting, polishing, and in places recomposing his poems* and essays. Although quite old, he was extremely conscientious about this and often worked deep into the night. He even neglected frequenting new theatre performances.

* *Historical note:* The poems are variations on actual verses by Wang Anshi (1021-1086).

His wife worried about his health. “You are no longer a little boy, and yet here you are, earnestly doing your homework. Don’t tell me you’re afraid the teacher might scold you?” she teased him.

“You don’t know how right you are,” Anshi answered, looking up from his poem about the emperor’s carpenter who did not bother to use a towering tree for the great banquet hall. “I am no longer a young pupil, but I have the sternest teacher possible. It is the future generations, those who are going to appraise my collection. I am rewriting it so assiduously because the Sage Ken-ye opened my eyes to the fact that subversives must be twice as good writers as the orthodox, who have the great current of habit to carry them along. Expending much energy to divert the current, I am afraid wrong or weak suggestions might remain in my work, so that high-minded people born after us on the river banks would not find it usable for their interests.”

Just after this discussion, which forced him to formulate his deep reasons for working so assiduously, Anshi redid two of his poems “Plum Blossom on Solitary Hill” and “On the River.” He read them to his wife:

Plum Blossom on Solitary Hill

Plum blossoms beginning to fade among thorns,
the fairest woman clad in filthy tatters,
a sad statesman hiding amid weeds.

Stark straight, their lone loveliness
bears aloft the winter sun; still, soundless,
their far-flung fragrance trails the wild wind.

Too late for transplanting, their roots
grow old; looking back at the imperial park,
their colors are being drained.

On the River

River waters shiver in the western wind
river blossoms shed their belated red.
A blasted maple mirrors beneath the sandy bank
tying the boat, I notice scars from former years.

His wife liked the second poem better but held for both that the present should not be forgotten in order to luxuriate in regretting the future or the past. Reflecting on his political career and his life in the light of that critique, Wang then wrote a new poem, his famous “In the Countryside,” in which the ruling class gobbles up the peasants’ life:

In the Countryside

The sun beats down merciless. No shade left,
mulberry leaves have been grazed clean.

On comfy reed beds silkworms loll
grown into corpulent lazy cocoons.

Casually I inquire about the village customs
how come that with the hard work they go hungry,

How come that with all the silk they go ragged.
I get an oblique knowing look, and silence.

His wife liked this poem best.

Fu Wen liked to repeat this story to his melancholy fellow-intellectuals. True, Wang's powerful enemies remained in power for several generations, so that the collected works' edition was destroyed and his name maligned. Yet--Fu argued--Wang Anshi had found the right balance between regret for the past, orientation toward the future and enjoyable work in the present. Circulating singly, many of his refurbished poems, and even some essays, were strong, right, and suggestive enough to survive.

Mean Means and Fair Ends

The King of Chu was sore beset by strong enemies. He called for Feng Huan and charged him to take twenty two measures of gold and four horse carriages to the King of Chiao on the east coast in order to get his help. Feng was further to promise a future alliance with Chu against any enmities Chiao might incur.

Feng Huan threw back his head and laughed: "As I was coming to the court," he explained, "I saw by the wayside a landowner making his seasonal sacrifice. Taking up one pig's trotter and one flask of wine, he prostrated himself before the shrine. 'May the season be bounteous,' he demanded of the gods. 'May you keep your faith with me! May the granaries overflow in Summer, the wine vats in Autumn! May my wives all bear sons and my concubines delight me!' So much in return for so little, I thought. The memory of that incongruous scene is what made me laugh." Yet Feng's voice was not particularly merry.

"Do you think I'm offering too little?" asked the king.

“How would I dare to?” replied Feng. “Consider what you would do if you were the powerful King of Chiao. Would you need assurances about a far future? Consider on the other hand your present situation. What will all the husbanding of your wealth gain you if you lose your crown?”

The King of Chu gave Feng eleven hundred measures of gold, forty four horse carriages, and eleven pairs of discs made from the purest pale jade without flaws or cracks. Receiving them, the King of Chiao became Chu’s fast ally. Chu’s troubles were over.

Fu Wen commented upon that very ancient story: Of course, had the King of Chiao been Chu’s sworn brother, he might not have needed large and timely gifts but just trusted to the friend’s understanding. But even so, a messenger cannot come empty-handed and it is better not to presume too much upon past affection. Alas--or perhaps fortunately?--human affections need rekindling every so often by Her Majesty Matter, thru palpable proof. Fire needs friction, intellectual sympathy is re-induced and feeling revives thru sensual stimulation and feedback, a mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. We flow and fly away all the time, a swift river and its froth. How else then would a lover know that the perpetually changing partner still delights in her or him? In other words, that he or she is still a lover?

The Impatient Cultivator

In the southern kingdom of Chu there lived an impatient man. He had an acute sense of time’s wingéd chariot swooping down on him, and believed he could prolong his life by cramming its every moment full of events and doings. Therefore, he seemed always in a hurry and always late.

He was particularly anxious that the rice-plants he grew should grow fast. He would have best liked to see them shoot up visibly, as in a time-lens. Imagine his impatience when one year his rice was insufficiently watered and didn’t grow at all! He found out that his son, absorbed by playing, had forgotten to open the water sluices in that dry year. He pulled the boy’s ears hard and managed to recuperate the lost time by abundant watering. Still, the rice didn’t grow fast enough for his taste.

A few days later he saw to his horror that only the merest trickle of water was coming down the channels, though the sluice gates were properly raised. The main sluice, he discovered, had been used by the local feudal overlord to divert the scarce water to his own fields; not

enough was left for the small cultivators like himself. In his rage, he rushed to the paddy and gave a tug to each and every rice-shoot, to help them shoot up from the earth. He came home quite crushed by the fatigue. But the poor rice-plants merely began wilting. The cultivator grew so enraged he had a fit, and had to be restrained.

His fellow-villagers repaired with him to the famous healer La Ma-reng: was this man crazy or right, they asked; what is to be done with or for him? Master La, tasting tea with Master Fu Wen, nodded thoughtfully: "He has the right general idea--events should be steered, and most people can be educated. His son can certainly learn from the pain in the ears, though one would hope better methods for memorizing may be found. As for the rice-plants, they cannot learn by being pulled up. If their education is to be speeded up, they must be stimulated from within, playfully. We cannot tell yet how and whether this may be done."

Fu Wen, who had in his youth followed the peasant insurgents against the Tartars and was ever since considered not quite safe by the authorities, added: "Before the properties of rice can be investigated, we must be sure to have enough water. Your rage," he instructed the distraught villager and his friends, "would be better turned toward uprooting the lords in control of the sluices. If you manage that, then you could also start building new dams, channels and sluices, to get enough water in dry season. Then you could become rich enough to let some of Master La's disciples live in your village and devote their whole lifetimes to finding just what happens inside the rice-plants to make them shoot up fast or slow."

The impatient cultivator saw that his proper and right impatience must in great part spread through the channels of his fellow-villagers and indeed his descendants. He was none too pleased with that: "I might perhaps accelerate my personal life up to a point, but if the power-relations are so deeply embedded into the plant and the society organisms, isn't this a very long-range program?" he inquired with ill grace. "Alas, a single human life is too brief," conceded Master La, looking with sympathy and sorrow at him. "I too find this scandalous. Perhaps our very far descendants should start considering how to finally change that also."

Carrying the Torch, Or: si jeunesse savait

The king of Chin complained to Shih Kuang, his blind music-master and advisor:

“I would love to study music and philosophy and poetry, but it seems a little late in the day for me. The proverb says: ‘Studying while young is a rising sun; studying when mature is the midday sun; studying when old is a torch.’ The torch is feeble compared with the sun.”

Shih smiled ruefully: “Is obscurity then better? More: doesn’t the fitful torchlight differ incomparably more from full obscurity than from sunlight? And consider further: is it not possible that she who looks by torchlight looks more closely upon the circle of light and what is within it? Perhaps the torchlight seer may then see more than the sunlight seer?”

“Ah—” exclaimed the king, taking fire from the blind sage, “it is then also possible that he who looks by torchlight delights more in what he sees? And if he sees fewer objects than by sunlight, that he looks deeper at and into each?”

“As well,” replied Shih, “it is possible that torchlight lookings-on do not only advantage the seer but also delight whoever is seen. The seen becomes precious when the seeing is effortful.”

“You are right” agreed the king.

Prince Ping, the king’s young son, overheard this discussion. His lips shaped a sardonic smile as he continued on his way toward a picnic on the water. The loveliest courtesans will all be there, in his royal barge, and if the sun will shine warmly enough, there’ll be bathing in the nude: fun and games, much lovemaking, feasting, wine-drinking and poetry recitation. Torchlight indeed! But then, what can you expect from a blind musician and an aging father? When he became king and he lost himself in pleasant reveries.

Shih Kuang could have told him that at his age, his father had been the same. So had Shih himself, before he lost his sight.

Better Late Than Never

Voor Annemarie

Master Kung suppressed a stanza of the *Shih Ching* which went:

The blossoms of the cherry tree,
How wondrously swaying!
Not that I do not think of you,
But your home is so far off.

He believed the verses were insincere: “If the speaker really thinks about his or her beloved, there is no such thing as being far away.”

Soon afterwards, the Master died. His disciple Hua, left in charge, attempted to keep a stiff upper lip: "If we really think about the Master, there is no such thing as his being far away." Yet in the midst of supervising the funeral procession, Hua broke down and had to be led away, sobbing.

Yui, whom the Master had considered his most gifted pupil, commented ruefully: "The Master's absence pulls in an opposite direction from the Master's opinion. Just so, the lover's thought was strong but the absence of the beloved is stronger. The folk poet was right."

The disciples' piety prevented them from restoring the quatrain into the *Odes*. Yet they managed to preserve it: they cited it in full when relating the Master's unfavorable opinion.

884-886

It Worked Once

The village of Jiang on the mountain slopes of Lu got ruined by war and taxes. Luckily, the lords were in those years too busy fighting each other to bother actually wiping it out. A neighbouring village, though poor itself, loaned the Jiang seed. But until the harvest, the villagers had to endure on grass and bark.

A farmer who had a numerous family was about to despair, when one day, weeding his small field, he saw a rabbit dash by and bump headlong into a big tree trunk, breaking its neck. The farmer picked up the rabbit: his wife and children had a succulent meal. Nursing its remains, it lasted them many a day. They took courage and, with most villagers helping each other out, just managed to survive the bad period. Only one of the eight children died.

One generation later, the farmer's son got into similar straits. The village was again severely threatened by the lords' pressure. Like everyone else, the son remembered well the miracle that had saved his family when he was small. He laid down his hoe and sat under that big tree, hugging his knees, waiting for a rabbit to bump itself off. He waited for days on end, but no rabbit obliged. His exasperated wife tried to tell him: "Don't just sit there--set at least a snare!" But the son fought her off, recounting the story of his father.

That year, one lord, ascendant over all others, sent an expedition to the Lu mountains. He hired a few hungry refugees from the village to act as guides. The villagers were too weakened from hunger to know what hit them. Half of the inhabitants were wiped out; the other half were reduced to serfs of the mighty lord and his quislings. The clan name had to be changed.

A Proper Grinding

King Chao invited Master Mo, and the Master was preparing to join him.

His most loyal disciple, Chu, said: "I have been hearing for years from you, Master, that a virtuous person does not join a man who lives off the peasants' sweat, for this would strengthen the rule of the bloodsuckers. Now Chao would not be a king if he did not defend the landlords. How can you justify enrolling under his flag?"

Master Mo sighed: "It is true I said that, but I have two replies. It has also been said, 'Hard indeed is that which can stand grinding.' Can I allow myself to be treated like a gourd which is not eaten but hangs from the end of a string? Little by little, it dries up, so that at the end children use it as a rattle to scare passers-by on the Night of the Dead.

Moreover, Chao's court and state are large and in places contradictory. Ultimately, he keeps the peasants quiet so the bloodsucking can continue. But within that, new grain strains are also developed, birds imported to eat up the noxious insects, and good seed culled from bad. I do not necessarily lose my virtue if I do some good work there, useful also for a possible future where peasant govern themselves. I am paid by the bloodsuckers, but their state possesses all the grain and silver anyway: who else could I be paid by? Whether I lose my virtue depends on their wiles and mine. At the moment, the tiger is sated and can be played with. If I have a good deal of luck, I may still succeed to work without legitimating the bloodsuckers as being anything more than the real holders of power and of opportunity for work--which they really are. Truth is to be faced."

But seeing his honest disciple's troubled face, he quickly added: "Of course, I may lose my virtue and the tiger may swallow me. This truth, too, is to be faced."

487-1098

Listening to Criticism (Cattle Driving and Climbing Lessons)

Kou Mien, herself a learned but also practical person, objected to Fu Wen's writing: "I think I recognize all your quotations from the classics but I don't see how they hang together: you make such big jumps in your argument. Is there anybody who understands you?"

Fu Wen quoted the ancient master Kung: "In my studies, I start from below and get through to what is up there. If I am to be understood at all, it will perhaps be after my death." But abbess Kou shot this

down: "Master Kung's times were slower than ours. Can your urgent teachings afford to wait so long? Isn't some understanding right now the best guarantee of more understanding later? Why don't you give clear instructions how to follow your path?"

Respecting Kou's shrewd judgment, Fu attempted a better defence: "Life brief—craft vast,' say the classics. I have more interests and ideas than time. If I were each time to explain more than a few of my main presuppositions, I could never get to shaping many of my ideas nor serve many of those interests—even in what may well be an initial and sketchy way. I could at best formulate either only my views about Music or only those about the State. Now--unfortunately for simplicity--my ruling intuition, my *idée maitresse*, is that Music cannot be understood without grasping the State, and viceversa. Indeed, to think of State and Music as separate entities seems to me the root of our troubles."

"I can see that," said Kou pensively. "Getting my nuns to cultivate our vegetable fields in a proper order presents the same problems as getting them to sing well in choir."

"But then," rejoined Fu, "this forces me to herd my findings together concentrically, as if I were leading scattered cattle, dispersed by careless stewards, from various directions to the same fertile valley with the best grass. To get them there, I must often climb thru difficult as well as different mountain passes and tortuous paths. Sometimes my cattle have to jump from crag to crag like chamois: we have no choice. Of course, sometimes I simply lose my way and miss an easier road--and sometimes I grow very tired and abide awhile in an intermediate valley. But how am I at the same time to mark paths and give climbing lessons to would-be followers? I can only say humbly (as I say to you, dear Mien): Please judge my cattle from the taste of their milk and flesh. If you find it good, follow me as best you can, as far as you find it useful, on the road to your own, perhaps greener pastures."

Abbess Kou was not fully satisfied, but promised to consider Fu's argument. They even started speculating whether they could write together a tract about how Music in the State relates to nuns' singing (and viceversa). Fu Wen secretly hoped this would help him to learn how to strike a better balance between positions necessary to be taken up as quickly as possible and presuppositions to be explained as thoroughly as necessary. As for the abbess, she remembered their Master, Kin-yeh: "The best way to criticize a river is to dig a new channel for it; the best way to criticize a fruit tree is to graft new fruits on it," he had taught.

The Naive Hart

A hunter in the state of Chu captured a very young hart. His hunting dogs, barely tamed wolves, licked their chops at the sight of the succulent prey; the hunter had to beat them off from jumping at the hart's throat. Having decided to keep him, he thenceforth every day showed his favourite to the dogs, holding him close and training them to accept him. Little by little, the hart started frolicking with the dogs, especially with the puppies. Understanding their master's will, they too played with him. The hart grew up believing that the fierce dogs were his protectors and best friends. They lived in a close intimacy.

One cold Winter the master was away for a long time. When the hart came out of his safe shed to his old friends, the dogs looked at him with a mixture of glee and fury; they threw themselves on the hart and tore him into bloody pieces.

Fu Wen commented on hearing this story: The saddest thing about this quite normal event is the fact that it is normal, that the hart dies not understanding that in this world good masters and tame wolves are exceptions. In order to be truly safe, harts would need a world in which they would be their own masters and could keep the wolves permanently at bay. Maybe the wolves would then--in a rather long duration--really turn into such dogs a hart could keep company with.

Consistency and Small Talk

As a boy, Fu Wen was indelibly marked by a terrible war in the state of Chi. It was ended by a peasant uprising which preached that the right Way consists in first finding proper formulations about people's position in the universe, and then in translating those insights into decisive social action. Led by some artisans and scholars, followers of Master Ma who had first codified such millennial preachings, the peasants defeated the invading Hsiung-nu (Huns) as well as the large landlords who had supported the foreign invaders. Having seen the peasant movement's faith work, Fu Wen became convinced that theirs was the correct Way. He gladly served the new peasants' and artisans' king of Chi. His fame as a preacher of geometry spread: people said he carried some glimpses of the way toward the New World over into his measuring preachment.

On a visit to the geometers' guild in the state of Liang, Fu was asked to serve the king of Liang with an emolument and rank much higher than those he had in Chi. He refused indignantly. Yet ten years later he was to be found in Liang.

His friend, the she-hermit Shan Ming, asked Fu to explain his inconsistency: “Why did you leave Chi? Haven’t you betrayed the Way?”

“I was dismissed three times in Chi,” answered Fu. “The first time it was for being so zealous in pursuit of the Way that I offended some fellow-travellers. I accepted that, and worked my way up in another field. I was dismissed again for implementing correct formulations in my own fashion; getting the right answers with different reasoning was held to be incorrect. I accepted that too. The third time it was for striving after directions different from the prime minister’s ones. I then saw that I—and everybody like me—was relegated among the small talkers: allowed to comment about the Way but not to help delineating it. I could not accept that.”

“But why did you go to Liang, known for its enmity toward the Way?”

“Well, most other states also disregard and dislike the Way more or less completely. Liang invited me without asking me to abandon my attitudes: in fact, some of the geometers in Liang share them. The religion here is that each person traces its own individual way, yet that all the ways are in some mystical fashion parallel. The Liang priests were quite prepared to accept me as a preacher who would hold actionless forth about the Chi Way and following Master Ma. For them, this would at best (or worst) indicate another individual way.”

“But doesn’t this compromise and degrade Master Ma’s Way?” persisted Shan Ming.

“No doubt, this is a compromise, a poor second-best,” confessed an uncomfortable Fu. “Yet it was the best among the bad choices open before me. For, if I am prevented from following the Way in the only manner I know, I can make small talk with much less heartbreak in a country that does not profess to follow the Way than in one that follows the Way falsely. In fact, if one is forcibly confined only to meditating about how to formulate the Way, this can be done at more depth in Liang than in Chi, where it is a matter that easily offends the prime minister: and sometimes even my still beloved king.

I must conclude, honourable Shan, it is Chi that—inconsistently—left the Way: not I. That was brought home to me by my final dismissal. I then had to adjust to a life without the only proper and firm delineation of the Way, which is done by walking it. I am exiled into small talk, merely thinking and dreaming about the directions the Way could and should take. External exile seemed practically preferable to internal exile.”

In the Doldrums: Nineteen Poems (1985-95)

On a Comment About my Book

On how to treat sheep
dog school & wolf school should not
attempt to argue.

585

Le Membre Fantôme

"It will all go away by the time you get married"
—European consolation when children get hurt

The skin between my phantom thumb & index finger
Itches. The wild flesh under my phantom fingernail
Makes me grit my teeth. My phantom knuckles grow white
When the fist closes. You cannot see the cut-off limb.
It only exists in a manner of speaking. Or perhaps,
In a manner of speaking it does not exist. Its only reality

Is that i feel all this, & that i can't do
Absolutely anything about any of it.
Of course, one learns to live with no hand,
No leg, no guts, no face. The brain
Supplies it all, phantomatically. A tell-tale sign:
The phantoms hurt.

It will all go away

By the time you get married: O phantom,
My phantom member!

17685

Landing in New York

Liberty is a
 Huge stone statue on a small
 Island, well before
 You land in New York, step on-
 To the streets of Manhattan.

*

Liberty is a
 huge stone statue hollow by
 old sea lanes; you don't
 see it if you fly in, come
 by bus or rail, grab a cab.

6-785

The Circle Drawer

Honi the Circle-Drawer in the Hebrew legend would in a bad year draw a circle, stand at its center, & declare to the Lord he wouldn't budge until the drought stopped. He's said to have slept for 70 years & awakened in an incomprehensible world. With compliments to the poem by Moshe Shafir, where I encountered Honi.

If one could threaten the gods from a self-drawn circle
 or only seize a messenger for Jacob's wrestle,
 one could usefully train for long-distance indignation
 adjournable for a generation or two of hibernation.

Warm blood is ill-equipped for sunless heavens.
 Up in their electronic castles, the gods of leavened
 bread have cut the navel-string, the hypocrite caesars:
 they pulsate above the clouds, cruel like comfortable lizards.

The ice age freezes the ocean circle cut out for fishing;
 the ship's mast laminates, too brittle for much lashing
 oneself fast; throats constrict in the chill of slaughter
 & the sour jokes of clowns trigger canned laughter:

More likely, the conjuror would today starve & rot
 before he managed to fortify his bearish site.

5985

What For?

The salamander swallows smouldering embers
 Earthquakes evict the unsuspecting nations
 Talk to mean something
 Signify so we can understand
 Explain the branchings so we can decide
 What are you saying to us?
 Why hint at humans by anatomizing nature?
 Why return to misty past when prospecting
 Possible or improbable futures?

Humans are creatures who come from afar
 We wander thru mazes multiply blindfolded
 What do our dead mean, inspiring & chilling?
 Our hunger, & the red Sun at nightfall?
 Our thirst for understanding, & for each other?
 The closed doors, & the holders of keys?
 Let light onto our paths! Otherwise
 Why speak at all? What can we do?
 What is to be done? Not much time

May be left.

18786

Planetary Robinson Crusoe

Stuck to commuting
 Between airless planets, the oxygen
 Sparse & rationed, carried over from old, the hoarded
 Matches guttering in my cupped hands, i call up

Stubbornly to myself every solar-flare hour
 John's injunction after a failed
 Commonwealth: They also serve
 Who stand & steadfast wait.

16886

Remembering Komachi

This world's acid rain
 decalcifies my kneecap
 what roads can i still walk?

25587

Lessons of Buddhism

1.

The Fugacity of Things opens its tiger jaws
 & the eve of my unquiet end flutters near.
 That roar is the tempest of universal evanescence,
 I need to elect a wavelength tuned into the Law:
 Unsatisfied, to understand more numinous lessons
 & the Buddhas will laugh & be content.

In the kalpa-long eclipse of the Moon, mirror
 In the sky, common reference informing the multifarious
 Disparate realities of atomic me & thee,
 In the night of the dead & the reborn & the dying,
 Hidden by the clouds of Obfuscation,
 In truth, the misery of this world!

All the myriad still & busy agents are impermanent,
 Their law is fugitive life shading into death,
 Having been brought forth they stop desist & cease;
 Nonetheless, joyous & without fear,
 Straightforward among the bodhisattvas, rejecting
 The salvific artifices, let us announce the Overriding Law.

For when i'm perishing of cold, the enlightenment is my cloak,
 A clear & fresh pond for the thirsty,
 A guide for the desert caravan, a bark for those
 Who needs must cross this turbulent river,
 A healer for the sick, a light that shows the way
 In this darkness.

2.

The first lesson is to see the ground you yourself stand on.
 The Auditors who merely listen & the Buddhas-for-themselves
 Only reach a partial truth. Their circle of light
 Is not the triumphant entry into the Kingdom of
 Correct-Full-Feedback-Awakening: their haloes shine inward,
 They are the Two Sterile Vehicles.

The second lesson is of the ladder that stands on the ground.
 It has three rungs & goes on, we know not where.
 The first rung of Insight says the surface covers emptiness:
 This is a truth but not the overriding truth,
 It divides thinkers from the animals
 Happy in their lynx-like sight of the prey.

The second rung is higher, from it you see the sensual world,
 But its treacherer panics when he follows
 This world's unceasing waterfall flow;
 She squints past the lynx's illusions & invents
 An absolute Reality that can be immutably grasped,
 Comfort for the absolutist mind.

Only the third rung is **en**, whole firm & satisfying,
 It shows you surface phenomena & Reality as one & the same.
 There are no Lords or Saviours hiding behind the senses,
 Sensorium, brain & Reality bite each other's tails,
 You & I live in this patient donkey body or not at all,
 However far we may fly, propelled by Dumbo's ears

Or on Aladdin's magic carpet, rubbing the lamp
 (Fortunate those who attain the enlightenment of **yon!**).
 Attaining enlightenment is to put dreams into tactile space,
 To have one's body transfigured by realized feeling,
 Safe as a sleepwalker on this world's razorback paths;
 This is the Correct Awakening, seeing the Thusness,

Changing & forever there,
 Before me, after me, in me,
 Before you, after you, in you,
 Between you & me: in us—
 In the world's dreaming body.

Disputing Bashô II

faded flowers:
 serene in far-flung temples
 wormhole Bodhisattvas

161288

*Futility**An Almost-Tanka on R. We*

To write out your views
 fully, in fifteen fat volumes,
 so that fifty years later
 they may be found laughable:
 what's the flippin' use?

4889

Adapting Saigyô

*Utsutsu o mo/ utsutsu to sara ni/ oboeneba/ yume o mo yume to/
 nanika omowan—Saigyô*

That reality
 is bounded by reality
 seems dubious
 why should it then be assumed
 that dreams are bounded by dreams?

61189

Europa, 1989/90

O beautiful above all others, past or present,
 Corinna, Lesbia, Cynthia, Shush, O kami & Muse
 Whose sweet love whilom warmed my double bed,
 Now you open moist thighs to any full wallet:
 O heartbreak, be less beauteous or more choosy.

390-902

From the Analects of Post-Modernism

*He composed the poem, grieving over the darkness
in people's hearts/minds. Ippen Shônin Goroku*

Past Master long gone
Future Master not yet come
Nightmare in between:
Looking steadfast before &
After is now life.

111190

Atlantis, Katatagae
*Katatagae (Japanese): a change of direction,
to avoid crossing the path of dangerous forces*
—Homage to Tamura Ryûichi—

What may i do this night? Two precise dry palms get thru the locked & chained door in the high rise by the railway yard onto my shoulders. Winds are howling. With a slight pressure two cold lips touch the hollow above my shoulder-bone. A kiss without passion, not even friendly where i'm sensitive, touchy, irritable. It's too painful that i taste deep bliss. It is mourning.

This town has changed utterly, turned into shapes from a Moon crater, tho the glossy postcard pictures look the same in deserted technicolor. One cannot see that it's airless, to be entered only in spaceman equipment, gingerly, as into a killer satellite. I seem to have lived my childhood there, among this town's early images, stained glass in the operetta square, glad & terrified, but not in this place whose fine blowing sands bury my exiled memories. Is there life beyond childhood? Ancient books of dubious authorship & disputed authority tell us so. Steadfastly, i've lived on more or less, on borrowed time, mortgaged space for half a century, in lieu of my sisters & mothers, my intestines revolting but not yet spilled by the bombs' shrapnel. This, by current definition, is success. More or less, i understand i was happy, yet even this is too hard. Surely i have died in that old war & am now in the intermittent quasi-peace of a tepid hell, for i'm not quite frozen, only the sly bombs explode from time to time down my throat. Surely i'm not this man, no nor this woman either, she's not my friend. I merely did the same things & in the bibliographies you'll find me adduced under his/her androgynous name. I wish i'd done all the undone things, realized both of us better in the whirl of steely

wings. I'm not my father, rather my inglorious mother looks mutely out of my eyes, always in the background. I have escaped the nationalist slaughters since i died. Ash-smeared hair at this dry shipwreck in the intermundium fills me with curious disgust. Fierce arias attempt to arise from it. My tongue hangs out like a dog's, lapping for water. He who sticks his head into the sand shall grit his teeth. Hegelian Europe, Atlantis left for dead, O my snow-white love! Winter king, O my lonely king! The self-punishment you received as your reward is very painful, even watching from afar. A proper distance is all.

You didn't come to revive me, double refugee from the Saharas of two continents. It just happened by your way. You were a kind Maya woman out of Eisenstein embracing in a swaying warm hammock an incomprehensible refugee from forlorn Atlantis. The only remainders of its fertility are fragments i carry around, like spores on agar-agar. Over there are sands, but there's also stone, the Painted Desert. I do not like the rulers of this universe, no nor the rules. I write to say how utterly i despise & resent them. Zion means end of desert, milk & honey, song of songs. The bankers & corporate hucksters desertify Zion, they are a personal outrage, a pain on harm's way. Please do not help them. I'm carried along in a nose-diving, dive-bombing universe. It is a dream from which i cannot awaken. You came to kill me. Zapata & Villa are dead too. You are finally burying me, in this peace of high peaks. I am not a hero. But i do try not to turn into a dune, i look into the mirror only & at that obliquely. The glass bells are tolling; loving means delight, then (ineluctably) suffering. Outside Atlantis now, you can hurt me a lot. **ei'yû iro wo konomu**, the salvific pre-capitalist woman out of the East is an illusion. Will anybody now kiss, at tender & efficient length, your swelling nipples, your clitoris, the elegant curve of your tensing leg from hip to toe, your beautiful working hands awaiting Rimbaud? Has your palm run dry with equal brown stubbornness?

These scars are wilted flowers from the station-corner **hanaya**. This world's Nessus-winter settles around me. I wish it hurt less. Dust falls from the air. I am not a masochist. Love is a dried-out date in a mirage oasis, we can't count on it. Even hate is no longer trustworthy, the only shielding to stand up against bombs is constant, unceasing disgust. Liking is a reliable water-gourd, refillable. It brims over if enough care is taken. Liking you very much in my fashion, i'd like you to like me (& all the world to be a song). Fashions come & go, gods die. The rising sun warms the Yucatan alligators & banyans, it also sets. Only the moments, their things and their tears are memorable--subjective objects.

Lacrimae rerum, dry bones, **mono no aware**. Tears rise to my eyes, i'm sorry, i did not wish it. The space winds are blowing, entropy grins thru the skull. Good! I thank you, in the name of my mother. Gods are also, may be, reborn: O rare miracle! Statistically impossible, of course, just like this watery planet we are salinizing, just like Atlantis, just like Haydn's Horseman Quartet, just like people: Not to mention (said he desperately & rhetorically) you & me, working together, warm cheek to shoulder hollow.

31792

Glossary:

ei'yû iro wo konomu = the hero is addicted to carnal pleasures

hanaya = flower shop

mono no aware = the pathos of things.

From Six Poems Reading Wang Wei

1. About Old Age

Nearing old age i ask about the meaning of it all
 Still learning from the failures of my life.
 No royal road was available, only smuggling paths
 Thru thickets & minefields, some clearings.

The horizon was visible if elusive
 The orientation stays constant tho forced into detours.
 The wind gusting in high-rise canyons cools my brow
 The Moon above the sea of flat roofs my paper lantern.

I still wield a word-processor, my back tiring. You say
 The fisherman's song is deep in the river
 I answer the fish are belly-up, the river way too dirty
 For a clean song.

Summer, on a Hill

For Marc

I took the best roads i could
 The choices got funnelled ever tighter
 Finally i'm here, this heavy Summer
 No other paths led to wider horizons
 So much is clear now to the future historians

I pick up the sutras & Sam of the Stoa
 Alas! we're back at where they speak to us:
with regret
 I reread the clarions of Karl & bearings of Bert
 They sound like beautiful childhood tales of Tahiti

A mantis the hue of withered grass for haying
 Swings its sickles, maybe for me.

111293

Plaint

Savage parent of honey-sweet loves, you whom
 Among barbarians it's illicit to name, Lady,
 Turn to me with all three of your faces,

All ears listen O unjust one, you
 Who allot & deny the salt to our daily fare,
 Disturber of order, remixing the cosmic cards,

Mongrelizer, many-breasted mother of pomegranates
 & men & their gods, for once, for once,
 Bittersweet goddess, the claims are too heavy,

Your debtor protests the debt, faithful camp-follower,
 Suckled on the grapes of your breasts, drunk
 & sober, drowning in your wine-coloured sea, the bitter

Taste in my mouth, finally.

3595

**To the Japanese Reader of
Metamorphoses of Science Fiction (1987)**

0. This book was first conceived and worked upon in Yugoslavia in the 1950s and 60s; it was written in its present form in North America and England in the 1970s. To those who might know the existential and ideological contexts of those spacetimes in sufficient detail, it might explain most elements of the book's profile. However, since this may not be very interesting for the impatient reader of the 80s, and since every book ought to be its own best defense, in this brief Preface for my Japanese readers I shall confine myself to two matters only, which strike me as needing some bridging explanation. Appropriately for a book in which one of the main themes concerns the parallels, differences and passage from spatial to temporal and then finally to a spatiotemporal imagination, these two matters will flow out of two further passages. First, the passage of time from 1977, when this book's manuscript was completed, to today, 1987 (which is, of course, also a passage in ideological space); and second, the passage of geopolitical space from the English-language to the Japanese-language reader (which is, of course, also a passage in time since in spite of jet planes we still don't live in synchronous times all over this shrinking globe, and Japan strikes me as being a very engaging and provoking mix of the 16th, 19th, and 21st centuries in terms of European social-time reckoning).

Of course, with a total stay in Japan of less than two months, I am not really competent to speak about anything Japanese. I will nonetheless do so, out of the ignorance of what the classical Chinese called foreign barbarians and the Japanese, in a geo/graphic spatial metaphor, the *gaijin*, the outsiders. Those standing outside often cherish the illusion that a glance from a sympathetic, concerned, but not uncritical outsider may stumble on some visions which long familiarity has dulled for the insiders: as Hegel taught us, what is known (*bekannt*) is not necessarily cognized or properly understood (*erkannt*). The seamy yet exhilarating aspects of Japanese megalopolis and silicon-chip technology are today in fact being appropriated by the latest interesting US SF development—the cyberpunk of Gibson and Co., the only interesting exception, after feminist SF, within a desert orgy of crass commercial lowering of standards in the SF of the Star Wars era—as a metaphor for new existential modes of alienated life. For me personally, or if you wish intimately, Japan is, furthermore, not only a very real nitty-gritty country which is one of the wonders and delights of my life experience (and I don't mean primarily Nara temples but the back streets of Tokyo, such

as at Nishi-waseda, and the people found there) and where I by now have dear friends and esteemed colleagues; it is also the country of a unique tradition culminating, say, in the Bunraku, the *Tales of Genji*, Hokusai's *Views of Fuji* ukiyo-e, and the subtle Japanese language. All of these I despair of ever mastering yet I persist in studying and using—and probably abusing—in my other guise of writer of haiku, tankas or sedōkas as well as of some short stories (not SF but parables).

Among other things Japanese—indeed chronologically for me the first of all the things Japanese—I am a largely ignorant but warm lover of Japanese SF, who has read (I think) all that has been translated into European languages, from Russian to English. The works of Kobo Abe, of Shinichi Hoshi, of my friend Sakyo Komatsu, and of so many other significant SF writers of whom I know only by hearsay since the translations are so few, testify that such experiences must be heard by us all, that they have already added a special poetic shudder to world literature—without imitating the dominant US models. Such works are much too little known by us ignorant foreigners, who should learn much more about your SF works and worlds. Only so can we become engaged in the common enterprise of making our little inhabited world inhabitable.

1. In the light of all this, my reflections will focus on the relationships of SF to technology and to politics.

Japan has been the first nation to experience the terrible fruits of “value-free” bourgeois science: first at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, then in the pollution and ecocide of the beautiful country not only of so many clear cultural beacons of mankind but, most important, of the gentle, long-suffering, patient (sometimes I feel too patient), talented, and all in all most admirable Japanese people. (I don't dispute that the terrible societal pressures in school etc. brainwashes most males into good retainers of the large corporations; but allow me for the moment to speak as a lover rather than a critic.) It may therefore be less difficult here to understand what has by many of my—bourgeois or liberal—reviewers been felt as excessive moralizing or prescriptiveness of my position about art in general and SF in particular. I deny that position is moralistic: it simply says that art flows out of and *finally* (with many crucial mediations which no critic can forget) returns to the encompassing horizon of relationships between people; and that if in proportion to its significance art clarifies such relationships, it makes them more understandable and therefore potentially manageable, and so makes life lighter. This is to my mind a statement of fact, but of course also a normative position in the sense that it establishes potentialities against which all actual achievements

are necessarily judged. The nature of norms is, I trust, open to debate: mine are, if one needs a label, neo-Marxist, yours, gentle reader, may be less explicit or different; however, to positivistically deny the existence of norms strikes me as perverse and deeply alienated. Life progresses through choices, and for us people (*Homo sapiens*) choice also means responsibility.

Does this mean we should abandon the technology that led to Hiroshima and today's physical and mental pollutions? Not necessarily. But I think the much more terrible prospects of molecular engineering, computer control of all our financial transactions, etc., etc. (the Gestapo and the experimenting Nazi doctors were naive in comparison), all mean that we must put such technology under rational control and wrest it out of the hands of the mad military and the capitalist profit-makers. We must resolutely abandon the notion of a purely mathematized, quantified, value-free, non-qualitative science. We cannot and should not go back to the Middle Ages, to magic and alchemy: I for one would not want to live in a world without water closets, electricity, smallpox vaccine or even telephones and airplanes (how could I come to Japan or talk to my Japanese friends then?). But we can learn from the derided "qualitative physics" that we are not masters but stewards of our planet, which will finally rebel if we vex it too much (we can already see that in the new diseases, the failing of the ozone layer, the African drought, etc.). We keep it in trust for humanity as a whole, comprising not only the powerless nations and classes of today (the four whales that hold up the world: women, the workers, the lovers, the learning) but also the past and the future generations. Writings that cannot speak (in the properly oblique, roundabout, parabolic ways of fiction) to the relevance of our existence in such a world are irrelevant to the world.

Writings that do speak about and to our existence are exercises in mental hygiene: they are liberating cognitive statements. And only cognition, true understanding, can lead us to an intelligent politics of the human species—which has nothing in common with the derisory antics of parliamentary parties but means, as in ancient Greece (and China or Japan), "the affairs of the *polis*, the community," its sickness or health. Marx has as much in common, for me, with Aristotle and Confucius or Me-ti (as their negation but also dialectical absorption of the positive aspects of a genuine conservatism) as with Jefferson. But all of them would have agreed that (as the ancient Romans put it) *salus rei publicae suprema lex*, the salvation of the body politic is the supreme rule. While I don't at all wish to have art (SF) be dead earnest preaching, while I think there is a place for readable escapism of non-pernicious kinds for our voyages on the Yamanote subway line or the Shinkansen

high-speed train, I must impenitently maintain the stance of this book that there is no value-free description, either in SF or in SF criticism. Pretending that there is one means simply that you are unwilling to discuss the presuppositions of your values. This seems to me unworthy of an intellectual (and as Gramsci and Brecht noted, every being that plans for tomorrow and makes choices is an intellectual).

How do I, then, think one should approach SF? Perhaps this can be in brief explicated here by transcribing the speech I sent in 1979 to the SF Research Association when it gave me its annual Pilgrim Award:

“From my earliest reading of Verne, Wells, Thomas More, and the Groff Conklin anthologies which circulated from hand to hand in postwar Yugoslavia, I have as a socialist been fascinated by the “it ain’t necessarily so” aspect of SF—which, for me does not start with Gernsback, Verne, or even Shelley, but with the universal legends of Earthly Paradise and the Promethean impulse toward a knowledge to be wedded to self-governing happiness on this Earth. Of course, this embraces also all the narrations which deal with analogs to such radically new relationships among people—however narratively estranged into other worlds and other figures such relationships might be, for the good and sufficient reason that one needs a complex optical system in order to see oneself. Bearing in mind that every SF narration is a dialog with the reader here and now, this also embraces all the stories that deal with radically worse relationships than the reader knows, since his/her reaction to such stories—by the rule of minus times minus makes plus or of negating the negation—recuperates these new maps of hell for the positive vision.

Looking back upon my criticism of SF, it seems to me that I have tried to mimic in it this stubbornly contrary and contesting backbone of the narrations I was writing about. I have contested Henry Ford’s saying “History is bunk,” and tried to persuade my readers that an understanding of the living, even if subterranean, traditions of the past is the only way to give the present a chance of evolving into a tolerable future. I have contested the saying, whose equally immortal author I forget at the moment (was it Damon Knight?), “SF is what I mean when I point at some books,” and tried to persuade my readers that any general statements about SF have to be a negotiation between empirical evidence that sets at least some limits to induction and logically, historically, as well as politically defensible notions and systems of notions. I have contested the twin orthodoxies that

SF is either the singer of technological progress/breakdown (as the case may be), or a thin disguise for the expression of eternal and mythical human-cum-cosmic verities. Instead, I have tried to at least approach a systematic argument on how history and society are not simply the contexts of fiction but its inly interfused factors, shaping it much more intimately than shores shape a river or blanks shape a letter. Finally—and possibly as a premise to all the other stances—I have contested on the one hand the academic elitism wrinkling its none too perfect nose at the sight of popular literature and art, and on the other hand the fannish shoreless ocean of indiscriminately happy passages to continents full of masterpieces miraculously emerging year upon year.

And yet, SF is not only the Gershwin Brothers' heterodox "it ain't necessarily so" but also "things could be otherwise"; it is not only militant critique but also (at least in approximation) triumphant revelation: in Tom Moylan's good terms, both denunciation and annunciation. Thus, taking one's cue from the matter at hand (as any materialist should), I believe we should try also to be positive about it and about its criticism, and to say something about those writings which help us to illuminate our interrelated existences: writings of More, Cyrano, Morris, Wells or Zamyatin, but also of Čapek, Dick, Le Guin, the Strugatskys, Lem, Gibson, Disch, Spinrad (add your own names here)... How much I may have succeeded in that in my own writings, or in coediting some books, but above all the journal *Science-Fiction Studies*, is for you to say."

2. But then, some of my well-meaning middle-ground critics asked, if you think SF should do such-and-such, why don't you deal with the significant modern SF? Why does your book stop at theory plus ancient history? I have two answers to this correct question. First, the present cannot be understood outside of a double perspective, synchronic (theoretical) and diachronic (historical). This book tries to supply such perspectives for future work. Second, we are all limited by time, money, sympathy, and so on. I did here what I could with the means at my disposal, and I am happy to see that some of my colleagues, in particular (though not exclusively) many of the collaborators of the periodical *Science-Fiction Studies*, have been able to use some of my instruments for work of their own. Furthermore, I have after 1979 committed two more books on SF which not only apply but also, I trust, significantly build on the horizons of this one.

The first one is *Victorian SF in the UK: The Discourses of Knowledge and of Power*, published in Boston 1983. This monster of 500 pages surveys *all* the SF books published in Britain between 1848 and 1900, beginning with an annotated bibliography of ca. 400 titles, continuing with an identification of most of the authors, and ending with a long study of the social discourses involved: who (which social groups) was in these texts talking to whom and for what axiological and ideological purposes; and finally, how can such books therefore be most usefully read as participants in this social discourse, which I found polarized between Power and Knowledge. This second book could thus supply a partial answer to those of my critics (mainly from the Left) who have rightly, if somewhat impatiently, complained about the lack of concrete institutional discussions in the present book. But that book is a frame-setting overview, and it never pretended to be a complete and detailed history (which would have to be written by a team with the necessary, and today non-existent, financial and other presuppositions, rather than by a single immodest know-it-all).

The second book, just appearing as I write this, is *Positions and Presuppositions in SF* (London, 1987), a collection of my essays written at the same time or after the present book. They attempt to deal, first, with further developments in SF theory, in particular with the thesis that all SF narrations are extended metaphors and parables about the relationships in the author's world. They also discuss, second, some central modern writers in the world (Lem, Dick, Le Guin, Yefremov, Asimov, the Strugatskys, the Brauns, C. Smith) as well as some crucial issues in SF criticism and teaching. Both of these two later books of mine would then explain further how I think one should approach SF.

In an ideal world, of course, they—as well as some further essays not collected in them, about Weinbaum, utopias, etc.—would have been presented to the Japanese reader at the same time. In the real world of commercial and other strictures, I can only hope that such curious readers—who would take the moldy slogan of “a sense of wonder” so seriously that they might in its name be willing to put into question their own presuppositions while weighing those of the present book—will like the book, whose Preface I am now concluding, so much that I will be able to say to my kind Japanese publishers: “Now, since you had a success with the first book, why don't you publish what I'm writing in the 1980s?”.

Dômo arigatô!

Montreal, March 1987

***C. Around Theatre and Brecht
(1988-2006)***

**Brecht's "Life of Galileo":
Scientistic Extrapolation or Analogy of the Knower?
(1988-90)**

—To the memory of Bernard Dort

1. A Reactionary Masterpiece?

*1.1. Brecht's *Leben des Galilei* (Life of Galileo, further LG)¹* is in many ways his most paradoxical play. On the one hand, from East Germany to Britain and China it is probably his most popular—frequently played and generally known—text for the stage. On the other hand, it is the only play which Brecht rewrote three times, including a significant change in the ultimate horizon and intended message; he was never quite comfortable with it (cf. AJ 2: 411 et passim, Mayer 170); and he died in the middle of directing its rehearsals, having at least for the moment shelved (as I shall argue) some of the basic decisions still outstanding if the play's horizon and meaning were to be clarified. As to the rewriting: "Judging by the proportion of Brecht's papers devoted to it in the Brecht Archive in Berlin, *Galileo* is much the most heavily worked-over of all his plays.... [D]uring the last 19 years of his life... its linguistic, theatrical, and thematic bases all changed drastically..." (Manheim et al. 265; cf. also Schumacher). As to the substance, the following note in his working diary (*Arbeitsjournal*) for Feb. 25, 1939, three months after he had finished the first version of the play, can be taken as valid for all the extant versions:

LG is technically a great step backward, ... too opportunistic. One would have to rewrite the play totally if one wanted to have this "breeze that comes from the new shores," this rosy dawn of science. All more direct, without the interiors, the "atmosphere," the empathy. And all directed toward planetary demonstration. The composition could stay the same, the character of Galileo too. But this work, a cheerful work, could only be done as a practical seminar (*praktikum*).... (AJ 1: 32)

¹ All references will be keyed to the Bibliography and entered by last name with page. Reference to Brecht's *Leben des Galilei*/ *Life of Galileo* (abbreviated as LG) will be by page of *Gesammelte Werke* 3 preceded by GW; other volumes of this Brecht edition are referred to as GW by volume: page. The quotes from the play and Brecht's notes to it use but occasionally modify the Sauerlander-Manheim translation

The terms used by this self-condemnation of Brecht's belong to his harshest vocabulary at that time, so that the note reads almost like a parallel to the clear self-condemnation of Galileo in the play. Though Brecht indicated what he considered a sufficient excuse for himself at the end of this quote, and though he believed with good reason from 1938 on that the final self-condemnatory speech of Galilei's could—"with a strictly epic performance"—subsume the empathy into this great character under the necessary estrangement (AJ 1: 27), he was aware that centrally significant ambiguities remained. Thus, Brecht's final discussions about the play with Ernst Busch, whom he had handpicked to play Galileo, centered on Busch's excessive sympathy for his role, which after Brecht's death broke through the directing of Erich Engel (cf. Mayer and Mittenzwei et al.).

In order to carry out Brecht's stated intentions, it might therefore be necessary in performance to partly rewrite LG, primarily by a significant increase and strengthening of the role of the people. However, I shall focus on the play as it has been transmitted from 1956 on (that is, the third, "Berlin" version to which I am throughout referring). Its text does not, in my opinion, do what Brecht in various post-1945 comments affirmed he wanted it to do: for in the Possible World of this play there is no evidence that Galileo was at the time of his trial strong enough to withstand the State apparatus and the ruling classes. Therefore, I do not see how this story could function as a cognitive explanation for the rise of a powerful and potentially useful yet bourgeois and alienated science. One must conclude that both a further theme and one or more other ways of transfer from play to spectators, different from monolinear causality, are at work. As to theme, Brecht noted that the play has two: first, "that in this societal formation the thirst for knowledge grows perilous for life, since it is developed and punished by society," and second, "the decisive difference" between "pure" and socially revolutionary science (AJ 2: 465). From 1945 on he strongly insisted on the science theme, treating it as extrapolatable to the atom bomb. Yet experience proves that the text strikes a deep chord in all spectators concerned with intellect versus power, with intellectuals and other people caught, and often broken, between the institutionalizations of power and of knowledge. Therefore, I shall explore the relative weight of the "thirst for knowledge" theme.

listed in the Bibliography. Except for them, all other translations are mine unless otherwise indicated. Brecht's diary, *Arbeitsjournal*, is abbreviated as AJ. I wish to thank: the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for a research grant and a Leave Fellowship in 1986/87, as well as a grant in partial defrayment of my travel expenses to the Hong Kong IBS Congress in 1986, where a first version of this essay was read; Laureen Nussbaum for hospitality and the reminder to look up Eisler; Vasudha Dalmia-Lüderitz and Roswitha Mueller for stimulating ideas.

Yet how is one to look for the new ways of referring to our age, in feedback with the shaping of the themes? And if these ways are found, what tenor or meaning do they convey? A number of concurrent arguments would be necessary, of which I can here attempt only one. My central strategy will be to interpret freely (and I hope creatively) Brecht's insistence on the story (*Fabel*) by not limiting it to the linear sequence of events, Aristotle's *systasis pragmaton*. The positive aspect of my methodological hypothesis (its *pars construens*) consists in the argument that a story is also significantly shaped by its *metaphoric system(s)*. This will be based on two lengthy arguments elsewhere (Suvin, "On Metaphoricity" and "Brecht's Parable") that a metaphoric system, as an omnipresent fictional procedure, underlies all narrative; and that Brecht's encompassing metaphor for this play is a melding of the metaphoric themes of seeing and eating into the overarching parable of Heavenly Food (see Dort 214-18) and uniting insight and nourishment, food for the body and food for the mind, but frustrated in the exemplary knower Galileo by an internalization of pressures exerted by class society. Here I shall advance from these arguments into a discussion of whether the play is an extrapolation to the atom bomb or an analogy to the position of frustrated knower. I propose to do so by focussing on one crux for which a proper meaning has to be found, if the play is to make sense: the final scene of the play, Andrea's crossing a dangerous border with the supremely important manuscript which we should accept as the cornerstone of modern science.

The traditional way to proceed would have been different. It would demand that one read all the criticism extant about one's subject and pick one favorite approach or at best an amalgam of the most likely looking approaches. But this positivistic procedure is predicated upon a belief in the cumulative nature of humanistic scholarship. Alas, in our ideological and therefore methodological Tower of Babel this is no longer tenable. Therefore, this essay shall not attempt to give any idea of the answers variously given to this question. Indeed, the negative aspect (*pars destruens*) of my methodological hypothesis is that no approach to LG that looks for a single train of causation can resolve my problem; and the overwhelming majority of criticism on this play relies on such a monolinear view of causation (which does not mean that much of this criticism has not been indispensable, so that I am standing on many shoulders).²

² If causality becomes much more complex, nothing in this essay should be taken as putting statistical, multi-variable, over-determined, changeable, etc., causality into doubt as an indispensable heuristic intellectual tool; my position is similar to that noted by Brecht after discussions with philosophers of science, such as Reichenbach, in Los Angeles a couple of years before redoing LG (cf. AJ 1: 272-78; also many other

1.2. The crux about the horizon of the final scene, being syntagmatic, can only be answered as the significant final part or outcome of the whole story this play tells and conveys. In general, the *ending* is that special and often crucial segment of the story that both retrospectively makes sense of all the preceding segments and leaves the reader with a built-in directive of how to apply the reading to empirical actuality. While every coherent narrative is a system whose elements are unified by partaking of a common model or paradigm of relationships, there is a basic dichotomy between “epic” and “mythological” narratives.³ The epic events must be presented as historically contingent and unforeseeable—and thus as a rule historically reversible—while the mythological events are cyclical and predetermined, foreseeable descents from the timeless into the temporal realm. The verse or prose epic has, so to speak, foregrounded the plot, which was a foregone conclusion in mythology. In the epic plot, best developed in the novel, “the ‘before’ causally determines the ‘after,’ and the series of such determinations cannot be retraversed backward...but, according to the epistemological model by which we explain our empirical world, it is irreversible” (Eco, *Apocalittici* 237). Thus, an epic text, as different from a mythological one, will be meaningful only if each syntagmatically successive element is the result of a paradigmatic value *choice*, as opposed to axiologically pre-established or automatized sequentiality. That choice constitutes the poetry of post-mythological texts, opposed to the myth’s incantatory repetitions of names or metaphors jelled into a fixed system.

comments, for example GW 15: 278-80, 20: 62-63). A good lesson in multi-variable investigation refusing wishful deduction is that given by Galileo to Andrea in the sunspots scene, which Brecht seems to have indicated as being (in GDR in 1955-56) the most important one for Marxists. The difference between closed deductive and open feedback systems (see note 7) is painfully obvious in the opposition between a dogmatic and a creative Marxism (Bloch’s “cold” and “warm” currents within it). Here too Brecht unique position was that of straddling the poles. In his “warmer” moments, he was against abstract speculations leading to wrong historical questions (for example AJ 1: 119).

³ Cf. Lotman, *Aufsätze*, in particular the part originally published as “O modeliruiushchem znachenii poniatii ‘kontsa’ i ‘nachala’ v khudozhestvennykh tekstakh,” in *Tezisi dokladov vo vtoroi letnei shkole po vtorichnim modeliruiushchim sistemam* (Tartu, 1966). Lotman concentrates on the mythological *siuzhet*, so that the binary opposition to epic (though I believe it is consonant with his indications) was developed by me as stimulated by Brecht, Lukács, and Propp’s *Folklor* and *Epos*, cf. Suvin, “The SF Novel.” The ending has been discussed in a number of studies of narrative semiotics beginning with Shklovskii (for example by Eco in *Apocalittici* and elsewhere); I cannot agree with the nihilist conclusions Barthes draws from his brilliant discussion of the “hermeneutic story” which ends in revelation of the truth, and which he—disputing Brecht—believes to be tied to individualist metaphysics (S/Z 82-83, 193-94, and 58).

Choice shapes the agential and spatial relationships within a narration in not fully foreseeable and therefore potentially new and better ways. It is the precondition for a narrative rendering of freedom. The ending is so crucially important because it is, in principle, the place where *the sum of all the narrative choices* reaches its textual end-result, and from which all these choices can be retrospectively valorized. In mythological texts, there is no proper beginning or ending; obversely, as Aristotle remarked, the presence of a genuine beginning, middle, and end defines any lay or post-mythological text (so that "epic" in this sense, as Brecht saw, includes drama). The dominant syntagmatic device in the European Middle Ages (and in many other societies dominated by patriarchal ideologies) was the overriding importance allotted to the beginnings—whether an event came from God (in Confucian China: from the ancestral tradition, etc.) and how. It is probable that the importance of endings, triumphing in bourgeois laicization (for example Boccaccio and the Renaissance), denotes the rise of this-worldly success as the dominant ideology and validation in the textual cause-and-effect system, homologous to the new extra-textual practice. In modern times, right-wing philosophy has proclaimed with Heidegger that "the beginning is greater," and left-wing philosophy with Lenin's *Philosophical Notebooks* that "the truth is not in the beginning but in the end, or better in the continuation" (171, cf. Faye 77-78). In short, the ending is the moment of truth for the paradigm's cognitive validation and the narrative's believability—for the coherence, richness, and novelty (relevance in a new situation) of the text as significant esthetic cognition. This is an axiological stress not to be confused with banalized demands for vicarious catharsis either by means of a happy or a tragic ending.⁴

In that light, the final scene of LG should be a clincher showing forth the proper attitude toward Galileo, the representative scientist: are his supremely important actions—within a historical dialectics between action and agent, and quite apart from any moralizing—finally to be

⁴ In a 1939 note to the Danish version, Brecht rightly polemicized against an understanding of LG as tragedy. Within that polemic, he noted that this play was not built "according to the dominant rule of playwriting [that] the ending of a play weighs heavier" (*Anmerkungen* 1110). But first, there is a doubt in my mind how far Brecht would have wished to apply this to the radically different (though still non-tragic) *telos* of the later versions. Second, had he decided to apply it to them, I would have felt that (since the Renaissance) a play's ending was weighty whether that play was a tragedy or not. Finally, a general theoretical point about this essay: I trust the tale within certain interpretive frameworks, not necessarily the teller. When I quote Brecht as an authority for explaining LG, this is not because I believe the author's intention to be sacrosanct but because he was often an excellent reader of his works and I believe those particular quotes to be correct.

seen as furthering the life or death of humankind? My initial question is, what kind of manuscript—supremely beneficent or supremely maleficent—has Andrea smuggled out to be the foundation of modern science? Is the resulting modern science to be a death-dealing and enslaving or a liberating and life-furthering one? Is his crossing the border with his books and Galileo's manuscript to be seen as a good or bad vector to the future? To put it prefiguratively, is it a manuscript by Edward Teller, the "Father of the Hydrogen Bomb," or by Karl Marx?⁵ In the positive case Galileo is centrally right and to be strongly praised as sly resister, while in the negative case he is centrally wrong and to be strongly condemned as pernicious renegade. In short, this question is a way of posing what Brecht himself saw as the root of all of his work, "the divine *cui bono* [in whose interest?]" (AJ 1).

If this question admits of conflicting answers, I do not see how the resulting ambiguity would help the play, since it fudges its central value. It is therefore not a sign of pluralist openness (Brecht did not go in for ideological pluralism in the liberal or anarchist sense) but a bad ambiguity. Now Brecht could have avoided this ambiguity by simply suppressing a scene that did not fit, as he did with a number of long passages during the 18 years of working on this play. Possibly he would have done so had he finished the rehearsals in 1956. But this does not appear to have been his intention: the final scene is powerful and impressive on its own, and he—probably for that reason—decided to cut it only for that particular Berliner Ensemble production (though he had not cut it in the much shorter "American" or Laughton version). There is no indication I know of that Brecht might have intended to permanently delete it from the text in any printing of the final, "Berlin" version. He seems to have simply shelved the question as insoluble at the moment. Whether and how it is soluble remains an open question; but since it is not soluble within linear monocausality, nothing can be lost by trying the analogical approach to it. I shall at the end attempt to integrate a brief discussion of this crux into a general view of the play's tenor or parabolic reference to our concerns as spectators today.

⁵ I have argued that at least in *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* Brecht used a Marxist prefigurative allegory—see Suvin *To Brecht*. Let me record here for posterity Helene Weigel's boast to me in May 1970 that it was she who persuaded Brecht to cut that scene in his 1956 rehearsals. I think—with Eisler—that this is finally an indispensable scene, in fact a key ending that must be disambiguated (is Andrea the parabolic figure of bourgeois science leading to the atom bomb or of popular science leading to Marxism and survival of this planet?—see the end of this essay), so that it is very regrettable that a sick Brecht did not have time to focus it.

2. *Extrapolation of Science or Parable of the Intellectual?*

2.0. If I can invite the reader to assume, on the basis of the two studies of mine I mentioned earlier, that the metaphoric way of cognition is, without pretending to exclusiveness, at least as necessary an aspect of the story and of making sense of a narration as a linear plot—then a suspicion should arise that extrapolation cannot be the whole story in LG. Whatever Brecht may have indicated he wanted LG from 1945 on to convey (cf. his *Anmerkungen*), an extrapolation from the Galilean rise of alienated science to its atom-bomb culmination is in my opinion not even the principal story. Extrapolation as a scientific procedure is predicated upon strict isolation of one element from a situation or process, and a strict (or crude) arithmetic ratio between the points from and to which that element is being extrapolated (in this example, the 17th and 20th centuries). However, history is not a quantitatively measurable space, nor will the ensemble of human relationships stand still for a single element to be extrapolated against an unchanging background. The shaky methodological premises allow extrapolation only very limited, if not notoriously dubious, value in the human or social sciences. The meaning of LG is arrived at from the whole story-as-vehicle—the ensemble of gestic, verbal, and other signs—*by analogy*; this play too is mainly (that is, where it works) a parable. True, since a parable has to have a coherent vehicle and since that vehicle may, in a historicized variant, have a future tenor, the linearity of the plot remains important, but only if its secondary and functional character is clearly understood. In that case, there is little sense in debating—in the wake of some of Brecht's indications—whether Galileo's capitulation was indeed the Original Sin of bourgeois science, whether his more class-conscious resistance could have led to a kind of physicists' Hippocratic Oath (whose effectiveness is itself an idealist notion in Brecht's sense of not being realistic, see AJ 1:148), etc. Such scholastic disputes are then simply the obverse of the heroic liberal arrow (rightly repudiated by Brecht) from the unbowed "Eppur si muove" speaker upwards through history. What makes sense is to ask what kind of parabolic tenor or meaning does the plot, and the paradigm, of LG possess.

2.1. It would be interesting to follow Brecht's tortuous and often tortured opinions about this play. In this essay, it seems pertinent to ask only how come that, during 18 years of an on and off struggle, this material presented such unsurmountable difficulties to the author of (after all) other no less complicated plays. I propose as answer that in the case of *Mother Courage and Her Children* Brecht had a crystal-clear grasp

of the *Grundgestus*, the thematic-cum-attitudinal field, of warfare, in *The Good Person of Szechuan* of goodness (friendliness), and in *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* of social stewardship; in LG he had quite ambiguous ideas and feelings about science. Brecht always accepted productive critique as *the* privileged cognitive horizon for his age (see Suvin, “Brecht: Bearing”). At some point, say 1930-50, he privileged a politically committed “science” (in which he included Marxism), and wanted to become a kind of Court playwright for Her Majesty the Age of Science; testimonies to this abound in his writings culminating in the *Short Organum for the Theatre*. But he seems to have held in a struggling, rich but uncomfortable, union of opposites both of the main Marxist (and general) views about science, which I shall provisionally call the absolutist and the pragmatic one. As I shall argue, the latter view finally led him to a strong skepticism toward “scientism” in both its bourgeois and bolshevik variants: a belief that science discovers universally valid laws, which are in principle independent of the people, society, and interests among which it happens to have sprung up (see now much more in my “On the Horizons”). And if only Archimedes had not been killed by an uncouth Roman plebeian, we might well have had an industrial revolution in Rome and Caesar leading his air force across the Mediterranean or the Atlantic (this is an actual proposition by Jastrow, a positivist historian of science).⁶

In this *absolutist* view, dominant from the 18th Century and through Brecht’s youth, science is not only a supreme good of mankind—together with art—but also “the measure for the truth and value content of a cognitive correlation” (Grimm and Grimm). This view was at its strongest among practically all the prominent German thinkers; Kant and Marx often talked in a similar vein. The central feature of such a scientism was that it eliminated the knowing subject, individual and collective, in favor of an artificially posited “objectivity.” Engels, who proclaimed that socialism should from utopia advance to being a science, codified this approach into an article of faith for the socialist movement (see Suvin, “Utopian”): the 19th-Century quantifying—post-Galilean, Cartesian and Baconian—natural science became (without any explicit argumentation) its absolute epistemological model. Now Bacon was one Brecht’s principal culture heroes—witness the short story about his

⁶ I have dealt with this argument in Suvin “Notions,” from which the juxtaposition of Marx’s, Engels’s, and Gramsci’s views is condensed and where precise references to matters dealt with in this paragraph can be found, and now much developed in “On the Horizons.” Cf. on natural sciences in LG also Charbon (though I doubt that Heisenberg’s complementarity can be applied to *Galileo*, 160).

death and the title of *Short Organum*. As for Descartes (also a subject of Brecht's studies, cf. GW 20:132-38), he is mentioned in the last Galileo-Andrea dialogue as another defeated Sun Hero whose treatise on the nature of light—and by metonymy himself—has been locked up in a mini-jail in direct extrapolation from Galileo's recantation (GW 1335).

On the other hand, practical lessons in what such a "value-free" or "objective" scientism lends itself to, first in classical bourgeois and then in fascist and bolshevik hands, led in our century to a suspicion that science too was intimately bound up with a (collective) presupposed subject and thus with given world-views, that it was finally a paradigm or (to put it more simply) an ideology. In the Marxist camp, this *pragmatic* attitude was perhaps best formulated by Gramsci's conclusion that

what interests science is not so much the objectivity of reality but man, who elaborates research methods, who continually rectifies the material instruments that reinforce his sensory organs and logical instruments for discrimination and verification—that is, culture, that is, world-view, that is, the relationship between man and reality mediated by technology. In science too, looking for reality outside people, in a religious or metaphysical sense, is merely a paradox. (55- 56)

While Gramsci's prison notes were not known to Brecht, his friend and teacher Karl Korsch held very similar views, not to mention other avantgarde scientists and philosophers in Berlin, Kopenhagen, and Los Angeles whom Brecht was carefully listening to. And Gramsci could claim a pedigree going back to Marx's own (admittedly intermittent) distinctions between a dogmatic and a revolutionary science. In this whole tradition science is clearly treated neither as a "positive" social institution nor as an absolute model but as a usable and misusable ensemble of cognitions. In that case, science is not an absolute truth (which we sinful people can of course only approach asymptotically, that is, without ever fully reaching it) nor is it necessarily the measure of all other cognitions. The crasser extrapolative speculations, arising mainly from some of Brecht's remarks on LG, are in this "scientistic" vein: could a democratic revolution have happened in Italy had Galileo seen through the Inquisition's bluff when shown the torture instruments?⁷

⁷ Quite theoretically speaking, the basic mistake of all the organicists in cultural studies is to have ignored that real organisms in nature and culture are always *open systems*. Closed systems (for example a watch) cease functioning when their original internal energy has been exhausted. Open systems are autotelic because they can

These opposite views on science, absolutist vs. pragmatic, entail opposite ideological and practical stances toward it. The absolute view holds that science is a “pure” methodology, an organon with its formal propositions and procedures for the construction and verification of theories, principally a “how.” The pragmatic view holds that science is, on top of “how” and principally, a “by whom” and “for what”—an “impure” productive relationship between (for example) workers, scientists, financiers, and other power-holders, as well as an institutional network with different effects upon all such different societal groups. Brecht, however, not only straddled both of these polar views, he had a paradoxically acute feeling for and understanding of both.

On the one hand, in the Engelsian absolute tradition, shared by early Lenin and by Stalin, he thought of Marxism as a (or indeed the) science. As I mentioned, this attitude was resolutely foregrounded in his most finished and deservedly famous but (as usual for Brecht) open-ended and not final theoretical tractate, the *Short Organum*. Yet arguments abound for the other understanding of science as well. *Wissenschaft* is in German, first of all, much wider than the contemporary English term “science,” since it denotes any systematically organized body of knowledge, for example theology or literary studies (cf. Suvin “Notions” and “‘Utopian’,” based on Grimm and Grimm). Second, and more important, Brecht had always abhorred any closed doctrine. He had a permanent mistrust of harmonizing world views, *Weltanschauungen* that prematurely stifled contradictions; he would at best concede to these “world views” the status of “working hypotheses,” which would however in the hands of bourgeois intellectuals always remain “very dangerous” (GW 20:159). Thus, the “principal thesis” of the *Short Organum* can remain intact when stripped of the scientific formulations; Brecht identified it in his diary as: “that a certain learning is the most important pleasure of our age, so that it must play a large role in our theatre.... The critical stance toward the social world is thus freed from the stigma of the non-sensual, negative, non-artistic, stamped upon it by the reigning esthetics.” (AJ 2: 518) This led in the 1950s to a final recognition, based

draw on external energy: their boundaries are largely permeable. Their state is at any moment the result of dynamic interaction between a great number of variables inside and outside the system. This obviously holds not only for biological but also for cultural entities, such as a human society or the interaction between text and context. Only a closed system can be analyzed fully in terms of linear causality. Self-regulating, that is, open, systems use feedback loops—and other complex proceedings such as statistical determination etc.—also called “a circular causality” (cf. Bertalanffy *passim*). This underlies my skepticism toward extrapolation; see now my “Goodbye to Extrapolation.” *Science-Fiction Studies* 22.2 (1995): 301.

on abuse of science by the "Western" and of Marxism by the "Eastern" class societies, that the term *Wissenschaft* was inadequate for serious theorizing: "the term [scientific age] by itself, as it is usually used, is too polluted" (GW 16: 701, ca. 1954). At any rate, the writer of the *Life of Galileo* could scarcely be suspected of an uncritical scientism, just as the lifelong proponent of self-management should not be supposed to have had any illusions about technocracy (or bureaucracy). What Brecht permanently retained from this semantic field was his insistence on the necessarily experimental, Baconian character of genuinely modern art, as well as the abhorrence of "mechanical formalism"—in this case, in modern physics. With Marx, he could have exclaimed:

Sense perception (see Feuerbach) must be the basis of all science. Science is only *actual* when it proceeds from sense perception in the twofold form of both *sensuous* awareness and *sensuous* need, that is, from nature. The whole of history is a preparation for man to become the object of *sensuous* awareness and for the needs of man as man to become sensuous needs.... Natural science will in time include the science of man as the science of man will include natural science. (Marx 311-12)

LG also demonstrates this unresolved oscillation in its stance toward science. The play shows, on the pragmatic hand, two competing types of institutions, the Church/State Establishment and Galileo's team, a budding counter-Establishment of science; it also abundantly and convincingly foregrounds what science could do to the interests of the landlords as opposed to those of the peasants and housewives. However, this central opposition is never shown as a dynamic clash; as will be argued later, the role of the people is too reduced. Therefore—on the absolutist hand—Galileo looms as a much larger-than-nature hero even in his defeat. Eisler rightly objected that in the later, supposedly critical versions he became doubly heroic, first in furthering the truth and then in his lucid self-criticism, and demurred against this highly interesting exaggeration (Bunge 254; cf. Mayer 176).

2.2. This exaggeration means that Galileo, while remaining a three-dimensional character, grows into an almost allegorical emblem of a potentially triumphant but then corrupted science. His position at the center of the play's dramaturgic agents would have to be further discussed within a thorough agential analysis as a supplement to this one. But I think it is clear that he too presents a blend of rich analogy (to any searcher for truth) with straightforward extrapolation (to Oppenheimer

and the nuclear bomb); and that for us today analogy dominates over extrapolation.

Now strict religious allegory (such as the *Psychomachia* or *Jedermann/Everyman*) differs from parable inasmuch as *single elements* from the allegory surface correspond to single elements in the tenor, while in the parable only the upshot of the whole story carries over into the tenor (one does not inquire, for example, what do the birds nestling in the mustard-seed bush correspond to in the Kingdom-of-Heavens tenor). This allegory lends itself easily to extrapolation (a linear extension of one selected process into the future), which could indeed for all of its scientific camouflage be understood as a “progressivist” limit-case and variant of allegory. In culture all the laicizations of Christian prefiguration are allegorical. This can be seen in a pure form in the dramaturgy of Tudor nationalism, from the anti-papal revolt in Bale’s *King Johan* (with embodiment of the nation extrapolated from King John to Imperial Majesty, that is, to Henry 8) to the framework of Shakespeare’s “king plays” up to *Macbeth*, which then breaks down in *King Lear*. The arrow into the future revives in some variants of Modernism, from the presentations of potential future stewards of the land in Chekhov’s *Cherry Orchard* and Brecht’s own *Caucasian Chalk Circle* to the future adumbrated as the vanishing point of Genet’s *Blacks* and Weiss’s *Hölderlin*. However, in the Modernist plays extrapolation is never pure (and allegory never strict or dogmatic), for it is quite insufficient for a dialectical presentation of problems more complex than the certainties of Bale’s crude (though forceful) agitprop, or, at best, of Brecht’s sophisticated agitprop in *The Mother*. In particular, and paradoxically, extrapolation cannot fully cope with the positioning and implications of modern science and technology as complex context of everyday life. (To mention only one aspect, their huge absorption into capital as opposed to labor-force—already noted by Marx—would have to be faced.) To quote again one of the best commentators ever on Brecht:

You can’t at all compare LG with the real development of physics, as it becomes practicable to the horror of mankind. I warn you against such comparisons! ... Brecht’s play shows simply how difficult it is to have truth prevail. How long can one fight before being destroyed? How long can one bear it until the end—and hand on the truth yet and know oneself as a weak person?... Physics is only the peg, the theme by which a man is shown who fights against great power, changes, becomes deformed, sells out, deplores the sell-out, and also discloses the sell-out. (Eisler, in Bunge 250-51)

Eisler's warning is very salutary, though I'd maintain that the extrapolative aspect is also present in LG. Brecht had perspicaciously identified two themes in the play (see 1.1), which I would call "the endangered knower" and "the betrayal of science." I have suggested that the central theme is the first, analogical one, about the bearer of truth in lean times, "forced to act against [his] conscience" (AJ 2: 510). This does not at all mean that this play is simply a return to individualism (though LG does need a star actor), nor that it is primarily *Seelenkäse*—psychology without politics or dialectics. Indeed, physics in LG is fully parabolical: it has a literal signification as physics, but its meaning or metaphoric tenor is politics (rather than an extrapolation to modern physics). Already in Scene 1, Galileo concludes his tone-setting oration by using physical phenomena (wind, heavens) to signify politics:

All this has stirred up a draught that lifts even the gold- braided coats of princes and prelates, revealing stout or spindly legs, legs just the same as ours. The heavens, we have found out, are empty.... Overnight, the universe has lost its center and in the morning it had any number of centers. So that everybody may now be looked at as a center and nobody.... (GW 1234)

This is multiply motivated and over-determined. First, the empirical sciences have, precisely since Bacon and Galileo, been shaped by bitter social struggles; Brecht understood this supremely well and, in that respect too, much remains to be learned from LG. The grandiose and supposedly "value-free" increase of humanity's power, the control and exploitation of nature, has gone hand in hand with control and exploitation of the less powerful groups, of women, workers, aliens—and intellectuals. This epistemological shaping of the natural sciences by politico-economical necessity (in the widest sense) enters into their very structure of knowledge: "Science too is a historical category" (Gramsci 55). Thus, it is not too difficult to have physics—whose fundamentals are, from the shamans and Aristotle's shamanic distinction between incorruptible heavens and corruptible earth to the present-day speculations, so intimately interfused with politics—serve as a vehicle for a political tenor.

Yet, second, the analogical proceeding in LG pertains (quite in the spirit of Marx's early Feuerbachian notes cited in 2.1) to human as well as to cosmic nature, that is, to Galileo's own nature too. Strangely and horribly, the upshot of the play is that in and around this Knight of Pleasure sensuality has withered. I have discussed in my essay "Brecht's Parable" how this is manifested in his degraded eating or gobbling. In the other

main metaphoric cluster of the play, the withered sensuality is manifested as his blindness. Physical blindness has from time immemorial served as a metaphor for spiritual blindness; the Sanskrit *avidyā*, spiritual blindness, comes from the literal sense of “inability to see.” In major fiction of our cultural tradition (for example, *Oedipus* and *Lear*) this blindness was intrinsically political. But it was traditionally, especially in tragedies, a chiasmic trope: becoming physically blind meant a final spiritual understanding. In LG this allegorical relationship too remains ambiguous. On the one hand, physical blindness is causally connected with Galileo’s secret copying of his scientific manuscript. Furthermore, it is accompanied by the clarity of his self-criticism. But on the other hand, Brecht refuses the classical tragedy’s comfort of existential failure plus ethical compensation: especially when the correlation of seeing with nourishment for the people is taken into account, Galileo is finally both an existential and an ethico-political failure. All of this brings about a delicate balance between tragic heroism and ignominious failure. The latter alternatives are in Brecht dominant, but the former ones remain present in a recessive form. The absolutely last exchange with which the spectators take leave from their sight of Galileo is:

GALILEO: Maybe not. How is the night?

VIRGINIA (at the window): Clear (*hell*).

The German émigrés at both the Zurich and Los Angeles performances, well-trained by circumstances they shared with the playwright, unanimously took this for a political metaphor: one will have to go on living in a dark age of war and cold war (Mayer 171), among Leviathans or in the belly of the whale, with yet some clear patches where one has to try and work—as Galileo did, though without success.

2.3. The central and overriding theme of the play is therefore (as I have argued in “Brecht’s Parable”) *the external and internal defeat of a pursuer of knowledge in class society*. The dramaturgic agent Galileo carries on the central trait of the overtly politico-economical obsession in Joan Dark from Brecht’s *Saint Joan of the Slaughterhouses*: “I’ve got to know it.” His final speech is in the same syntagmatic position as Joan’s deathbed speech before her ironic canonization. Such a canonization also exists in Galileo’s case though it is not overtly shown in the play: it is the spectators’ implicit historiographic presupposition about the legendary hero who murmured “Eppur si muove”—and the whole play is directed against such a liberal canonization, as a Bakhtinian uncrowning from below. The pursuer of knowledge is an intellectual, but—as Joan

Dark too indicates — this is not to be taken in the usual flat, sociological sense. For Brecht as for Gramsci, the intellectual (or the philosopher) is anybody whose social interests demand a pursuit of knowledge, all who reach for reason, from the old woman who gives her mule some extra hay on the eve of travelling and Mrs. Sarti who can easily solve the problem of hierarchy (who brings whom the dinner, GW 1256-58), to the Sienese masons arriving expeditiously at a better method of moving granite or to the philosophical lens-grinder Federzoni; while obversely the official Court Philosopher, Mathematician, and Theologian of Scene 4 are no true intellectuals. However, the sociological sense of intellectual as specialist in some matters of institutionalized knowledge or reasoning probably also echoes in the play: after all, Galileo is such a specialist (and Brecht was one too, as am I, as are most of the readers of this essay). Nonetheless, it echoes in contradictory ways, for the root of Galileo's failure is — in contrast to his appreciation of plebeian reasoning — precisely the splendid isolation of the sociological class of intellectuals. The *pursuer* thus does not become a *purveyor* of proper, life-furthering knowledge.

However, a crucial nexus in the play remains undeveloped by Brecht: has Galileo indeed come "objectively" too soon — say, as Babeuf during the French Revolution? Or is he merely one who has missed the boat (or better, upset the raft) of a realistically possible plebeian revolution? This is crucial to the play if one accepts my contention that it is primarily a parable operating by analogy to Brecht's (and perhaps to our) times. For in the first case, Galileo is (and Brecht is) living at a time of the revolution's difficult and depressing ebbing. In the second case, he (and Brecht) is living at a time of the revolution's difficult but exhilarating rising. The exhilaration is splendidly shown in the first part of LG, from the great "aria" of Scene 1 to the joyous experimentation of Scene 9 — whereas gloom prevails over light, and blindness over (in)sight, in the second part of the play. In the first case, Galileo could not only not have done more than he did, but his whole work, culminating in the writing and smuggling out of the *Discorsi*, is (for all its secondary vacillations) heroic, as was that of saboteurs under the Nazis. In the second case, he could and should have done significantly more, and he is therefore (for all his secondary declarations) a traitor. In the first case the spectators can learn from Galileo by heroic extrapolation, as from an "optimistic tragedy"; in the second, Galileo is to be learned from by contraries, foregrounded in his speech of self-condemnation, as in a black comedic chiasmus. Brecht's first, Danish version was written against the heroic horizon, though characteristically it was a "heroic cowardice" (Grimm 112). In the latter, US and Berlin versions, written

under the enormous impact of the atom bomb (but also, I suspect, of Stalinism), he decided for the horizon of betrayal. Though the new age is not that great epoch extolled in the first scene in which “it’s a pleasure to be alive” (GW 1236), it is still a potentially fertile age, in which it is possible to hope, with Bacon, for the male birth of time, or for truth as the daughter of time not authority (the latter is put into Galileo’s mouth in GW 1269). Therefore, Galileo’s downfall stems, for Brecht, from not having openly allied himself with the rising classes. The syntagmatics of the play became the demonstration of the old theological saw that the corruption of the best makes for the worst (*corruptio optimi pessima*)—as Shakespeare put it (Sonnet 94), lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds. This horizon has been largely but not fully established in the final text as we have it. The consequences of such an inconsistency are partly good. They add to the richness of Galileo’s contradictory characterization as an interesting anti-hero, one who could and should but did not become a hero, an unrealized and wasted potential; this makes the play palatable to bourgeois audiences. Yet the inconsistency is also largely bad, adding up to a not fully solved oscillation between praise and condemnation, extrapolation and analogy, Aristotelian and Brechtian dramaturgy (see Mayer).

The cognitive power of a Brechtian parable lies in its capacity to allow for two diametrically opposed—symmetrically inverse—answers on its two levels. Realistically, it shows defeat in the contingent and alienated world of the vehicle, as in a *camera obscura* of the ideology. Turning the situation upside down, as the brain righting the retinal image or as in a chiasmus, the parable’s tenor then impresses upon spectators the premises for avoiding defeat in their world.⁸ In this respect, it could be argued that the matrix for all of Brecht’s later great plays was the experimental series of his “learning plays” during the Great Depression (the *Lehrstücke*). In particular, the situation-dependent chiasmus of outcome was foregrounded and thematized in *He Who Says Yes/ He Who Says No*. As Brecht noted (though I would demur against his overliteral focus on the bourgeoisie):

⁸ This is the central utopian dialectics of estrangement (*Verfremdung*) counteracting the empirical alienation (*Entfremdung*) of people, which is why I believe the translation of *Verfremdung* as alienation (as in Willett’s pathbreaking work) is a quite bad strategy; see the definitive clarification in Bloch “Entfremdung.” The reversal of outcome in the two historical levels of the parable is thematized in Brecht’s encompassing masterpiece, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* (cf. Suvin *To Brecht*). Brecht’s stance seems to me richer than the meritorious deconstruction of the post-Renaissance gaze by Foucault: my essay aims at an analogous Hegelian overcoming of old positivism and new nihilism.

In *Galileo* the moral is of course in no way absolute. Had the bourgeois societal movement which uses him been shown as a descending one, he could have safely abjured and made of this something quite reasonable. (See *He Who Says Yes* and *He Who Says No!*) (AJ 2: 500)

In LG, the lone Galileo's frustrated cognitive hunger and the people's dire economic hunger leave no doubt that, if the hungry are to be fed, an alliance is indispensable between a proper, life-furthering scientific community and the people whose life its science is supposed to further. Will the Roman housewife go on lacking milk? Will the Campagna peasants go on eating their whole life long a monotonous cheese dish (*Käsespeise*) by a sooty hearth with small spoons and no wine, though pressing for others wine and olives "amid overflowing vineyards and wheat fields" (GW 1294-95)? Or will science give them the epistemological tools (the sight) to see the sights they are not used to but would eagerly embrace if they were shown those sights as applicable and possible (*praktikabel*), such as giving milk to their own children instead of the parson (GW 1314)? Or indeed, will science even give them the insight to validate their correct but naive curiosity about the wondrous pear growing on the apple tree (GW 1309) as being possible and ennobling? Brecht was here no doubt, witness the allusion to Darwin through the speech of the Very Thin Monk (GW 3: 1281), thinking of Michurin and Burbank (the anachronism is permissible in a parable that *de nobis narratur*). However, this miraculous apple-tree is also the scientific Tree of Knowledge, a materialist counter-project and anamorphic revocation of the apple-tree of humankind's Fall; for the right stance of people today is, as Brecht formulated it in the *Short Organum*: "a critical one. Faced with a river, it consists in regulating the river; faced with a fruit tree, in inoculating the fruit-tree..." (GW 16: 671). And finally, will scientists (intellectuals, pursuers of knowledge) in doing all of this—inoculating or grafting the people with the critical stance—find a way to assuage the proper appetite for true seeing, for knowledge combining theory and practice, as well as their other bodily appetites—such as for Sicilian wine or for geese with apple and thyme?

In the *parable's vehicle*, the universe shown in the play, the answer to all these questions—or aspects of the same question—is negative. The scientific community jells as a "haggling, whitewashing, death-fearing" one that waters at the mouth only at the sight of a book as hallowed commodity (see the quote from GW 1339 in 3.2); Federzoni and the Little Monk are forced to leave science as community and institution.

The upper class can sip a little politically neutralized science with their daily wine (GW 1239), when it suits their purposes. Galileo himself, the agential hinge in the science-for-the-people alliance, pays the Roman she-wolf's price; having forsaken the Popular Front of friends of knowledge, the light-bearer (Lucifer) has fallen into the hellish dungeon of his own alienated senses: Brecht was, as he sometimes hinted, in some upside-down ways the last Catholic.

The protagonist's fault is that he gave up the fierce wholeness of his noble utopian desire to enjoy both earthly and heavenly food by giving in to, and internalizing, the terrible pressures of the environment. Both the militant Novum of future-oriented knowledge for the people *and* the triumphant "Antiquum" of instant gluttonous satisfaction for oneself are sundered and debased. In Brecht's stern version of poetic justice, Galileo will end up having neither. This punishment is correlative to the new hybris of having refused the salvific alliance with the people. But here the question with whom is the representative knower realistically to ally himself becomes quite unavoidable. It is the question of *power*. In this play's central blank spot, a power nexus sufficient for a cognitive decision about the representative knower's historical chances of success is *not shown*. LG does not dynamically, by way of what Brecht theorized as encompassing *Gestus* or system of embodied stances, connect the "by whom" and "for what" poles of a pragmatic relationship—here the scientific team and the lower classes. Benjamin had rightly felt about the Danish version that the protagonist of the play should be *the people* (cf. *Anmerkungen* 1109). This is impossible in the latter versions; yet the absence of the people—or of any social fraction thereof—as a political force (and not simply a suffering and sometimes dangerous mass) in them is glaring. However many dramaturgic agents come from and represent the people, however impressively Brecht's brief touches characterize them, however much the Campagna peasants and Roman housewives are talked about, there is no people as an (even repressed) coherent array in the play. The exceptional and quite wonderful Carnival scene is, first, axiologically and politically ambiguous: the people is in it an anarchic and superstitious array closer to Peachum's beggars than to Vlassova's comrades (they take Galileo for a "Bible buster" and a dwarf for "The New Age," GW 1316)—just as Mrs. Sarti (GW 1257, 1262, 1273, 1300 et passim) and later Virginia cook and bring the meals but disbelieve Galileo, while the boys and border guards in the final scene are a vision of Brechtian hell. Second, the Carnival is in this play quite isolated: a set piece for bit players, like a ballet scene dropped into an opera. Probably the fact that Mrs. Sarti, Federzoni, and the Little Monk are all static types is by itself not too important; but it is difficult not to allot importance to

the fact that the only evolution in lower or middle-class characters can be seen in Andrea and Virginia who—like Galileo himself—grow away from the people as a political subject. This is in stark divergence with the presentation not only of Galileo and his team but also of the ruling classes, who are sketched in economically but at times dynamically (for example, Ludovico and Barberini). Most important, the play shows how they interconnect and form a coherent political subject—say, the Church's and the landowners' interests; the link between the Cardinal Inquisitor and Virginia through her confessor.

The double alienating split within the revolutionary body politic (intellectuals vs. working people) as well within the potential representative hero's sensuality (seeing vs. eating), is irreparable in the world of the play's surface, in the parabolic vehicle. Yet all of Brecht's plays—and, I think, all historical plays—are vehicles whose *tenor* is our own times. In this play, structured as an awful warning, there is a twofold alienation, with interesting crossovers, of the sensual microcosm (Heavenly Food) and political macrocosm (the Holy Alliance, to coin a phrase). Regardless—or indeed because?—of its central blank spot about the political orientation of the people, this warning amounts to a problem left for our present, for the actual and possible *Lebenswelt* (lived-in world) of the spectator after World War 2. On the macrocosmic side, "the question is not the planets, but the Campagna peasants" (GW 1295) and the Roman housewives, and what will intellectuals do about a Holy Alliance which would allow them all to become their own lords and masters (cf. GW 1313-15). Conversely, within science itself this would mean reintegrating the Little Monk's question about the effects or ethics of science. On the microcosmic side, the question is how to unite the outgoing pleasure of seeing and the ingesting pleasure of eating. Taking these two as sides of the same utopian coin, the question may be phrased as: *how can an ethico-politically alert, formalized but practical science help the working people to see and understand, thus to become self-managing subjects who can unite earthly food and scientific seeing in the pleasures of the mindful body*—as prefigured by the initial Galileo. Everyone to realize his or her own Galilean potentials: nothing less than this is Brecht's immodest, revolutionary utopian horizon.

3. The Knower and the Holy Commodity

3.1. Such a discussion, which takes into account the play's analogical aspect (that is, its parabolic nature and the central position of the failed pursuer of knowledge) on top of the usual, monolinearly causal, aspects

of plotting and agential characterization, may provide an explanation for the final scene of LG. Scene 15, Andrea's crossing the border with Galileo's manuscript, is built upon the device of Poe's "purloined letter": that the best way to hide something is to keep it in plain sight so that it won't be noticed at all. This device (mentioned in the text) is developed by means of the retarding progression in the border guards' examination, from Andrea's luggage to the box he was sitting on and to the manuscript he is overtly reading all the time (which is finally not examined though it is the *Discorsi*). The scene deals with a particularly black variant of looking—police examination of books for forbidden ideas. Of the two border officials, the guard is illiterate, the clerk ignorant (he has never heard of Aristotle) and superstitious, and both are more interested in breakfast and collecting some overdue money than in any more thorough search. Though a valid grim comedy, one must observe of this confrontation that Brecht has made life for the scene's protagonist Andrea rather easy. It is doubtful the purloined letter trick would have worked with any guards which nearer to a normally efficient customs service than to the bumbling watchmen and constables in Shakespeare's comedies.

The other strand of the scene is borne by children playing around the turnpike, of whom three boys have speaking parts. Their power of observation is as low as that of the guards: a dark age has descended instead of the new age expressly associated with fresh and accurate observation by Galileo from his "aria" of Scene 1 on. Life in such an age is allegorized, I believe, in the children's initial song about Maria's shitty shift, with which she has to make do in a cold season. Obversely, their cruelty and superstitious ignorance, representing that of the populace in general, is remarkably conveyed in a few masterly strokes. It is a chilling worst possible variant of Brecht's constant—and usually positive—motif of "those who will come after us," the descendants who represent the future. It is concretized in the discussion of an alleged old witch neighbour, who is refused milk by the whole town but for whom Andrea on parting leaves a full pitcher. The play's food imagery recurs here for the last time and in its most basic form of milk. Milk is in LG drunk by babies, such as Felice's, or by old and endangered people—or by Galileo who shares some qualities of both these groups (until he at the end descends to the geese). Beyond that, the echoes from the pitcher of milk left by an old woman to a similarly beleaguered Galileo during the plague (Scene 5b), when a young Andrea courageously stayed on and helped Galileo get an important book, establish that a permanent ideological plague has won the day.

The main function both of the guards and the children seems to be, by contrast, the bolstering of Andrea's status as a clever Sun Hero—a secret but in fact superior folktale Third Son or Ivanushka the Fool—who triumphantly smuggles out the truth under the nose of repressive and obtuse authorities and in spite of a cruel and superstitious populace. He is (together with a faint echo in Giuseppe, the lone boy who persisted in showing curiosity about physical possibilities) the only exception to the unrelieved darkness of this grotesque scene. In this respect Andrea is clearly the spiritual son of Galileo. However, Galileo begins as a Sun Hero but remains such to the end only in the first, "sly resister" (Danish) version. This finale is therefore entirely appropriate to the play's first version but not appropriate to the horizon of betrayal (cf. Bunge 258 and 262). Appropriateness to this horizon would entail an Andrea that carried on Galileo's devolution as the key link who ensures the rise—and as the first representative—of the "race of inventive dwarves" (GW 1341) who will finally lead to the atom bomb. The dilemma of what is the tenor of the manuscript he is carrying, a liberating or a death-dealing science, remains painfully unresolved. In the scene itself, while continuing Galileo's life-work in what seems an unmistakably positive light, Andrea is even characterologically opposed to the egotistic Galileo: he is a knight in shining armour, kind to old women. To cap the scene, in the play's last reply, he is the voice of reason and modest wisdom that exhorts Giuseppe (who stands for the not quite closed perspectives in the future, for "those born later"—including us) to "learn to open your eyes.... We don't know nearly enough Giuseppe. We've hardly begun." (GW 1345) In the upshot, darkest night—this time, a very *unclear* night—reigns here. It is established by a fusion of what is being looked at (guards looking for subversive books) and how it is being looked at (boys lacking observation and therefore attributing appearances to satanic powers), both of which are at the antipodes of the pristine Galilean program. Yet even here, Andrea seems to exemplify and personify the heavenly food, a fusion of proper seeing and milk for the people: *lux in tenebris*.

Now Brecht unambiguously wished, from 1944 on, to have Galileo's trajectory seen as deadly, leading to the atom bomb. Yet the final scene—taken over without radically significant changes from the first, "sly resister," version—establishes an equally unambiguous spectatorial sympathy for the young scientist who is trying and succeeding to smuggle the truth across the border. This final bright message is diametrically opposed to the intended (and, in my opinion, on the whole attained) gloomy message of the play as a vehicle: the final scene works directly against the horizon established by the rest of the play. To answer my initial question: however masterly in itself, Scene 15 suggests that

Andrea is (figuratively speaking) reading the manuscript of Marx while the play as a whole, which had just culminated in Galileo's sardonic fulmination, demands that he be reading Teller.

3.2. Therefore, if my general argument about the significance of final syntagmatic segments in fiction is allowed, this scene proves that Brecht's dominant horizon in LG cannot be established by means of scientific extrapolation. When this is attempted, it results in cross-purposes due to unfinished ideological focussing. The only way that the LG story as a whole can retain its coherence is by stressing its analogical system, the encompassing metaphor of heavenly food, rather than a single-strand causal progression of events. The absolute indispensability of the initial great promises of dawn is underlined by "the morning [having] turned back into night" (GW 1328), by the loss of the clear light of science—or better, to avoid Brecht's scientific aspect, of a cognition which would satisfy equally the sensorium and the senses. This analogical *exemplum* functions by focussing on an extraordinary person. Galileo is not only the leading scientist of his time, he is, what is more, the potentially perfect example of how such unified cognition is also an enjoyment: even further, how it is—in its exercise as well as in its dissemination—almost an instinct proper to the human species, beyond good and evil, on a par with the necessities of food. The key, richly dialectical passage about this, which practically encapsulates the "typical character" of Galileo, is the one from the end of Scene 8, about being prepared to be locked up in a dark dungeon if that were the price for finding out what is light. But Galileo ends up with the worst alternative. True, a clever Establishment has him locked up in a physically halfway comfortable location, watched over by his daughter. Yet that location is, in comparison to the needs so eloquently formulated by him and shown by the play as a whole, a dungeon perverting and stunting both his gustatory and his cognitive appetites. Isolated from the people as well as from the by now fragmented international scientific community (for example from Descartes), Galileo will not find out what light is; neither in physics nor in politics will he (and the morally dwarfish science he inaugurates) "see the light." Or, more precisely, when they do see it, it will be the blinding light of supreme undoing—such as the atom bomb. When Galileo finally obeys his disseminative instinct, the *Discorsi* which Andrea smuggles out for publication are thus a quite ambiguous contribution to knowledge.

Finally, LG's two themes of endangered knower and corrupted science fuse in the fact that Galileo is a physicist: at some points between the first and second version, that is, at least from beginning of 1941 to end

of 1944, Brecht was calling the play, "*Life of the Physicist Galileo*" (see AJ 1: 177, 2: 381 and 446). In this roundabout way, once the centrality of the exemplary protagonist is fully taken into account (but only then), the Brechtian insistence on science as a modern form of destiny can be recuperated for interpretation. The play's upshot is to raise in us the overarching question what is knowledge—science, or any systematic cognition such as perhaps *gourmandise* (love of good fare)—*for*? Is it a furtherance of life or of death? In terms of the existential correspondences between the individual microcosm and the societal macrocosm established by Brecht, is it a life-furthering science for the people or a death-dealing science for the ruling classes? Establisher of (individual and collective) integral pleasure or total destruction? Heavenly food or demonic possession? In Brecht's parable, the vehicle shows at the end how the frustrated knower of Scene 14 and the frustrated people of Scene 15 are already in a kind of zombie, death-in-life state. But the utopian tenor for us not only remains unscathed but even gains in force by horrifying contrast to "what if this goes on?". Brecht knew—and the growing capitalist and bureaucratic adulteration of food, drink, earth, and air has confirmed it—that quite literally there is a most intimate connection and interfusion between the world's and the individual's body. In LG this is exemplified by a representative individual (who can stand for each individual). Therefore, the parable's tenor can today encompass, beside the atom bomb, the well-known complex of chemical and radiological poisoning of our bodies and of our minds, indeed the whole effect of institutionalized science used for the profit purposes of the capital.

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Brecht and Subjectivity: Stance, Emotion as Sympathy (1989-2006)¹

Darko Suvin

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I wish to pursue in tandem two lines of argument for mutual illumination about how we may think of the Subject today. The first one builds on my argument in other places² that the red thread central to understanding Bertolt Brecht's work and life was the image, concept, and practice of stance or bearing: *Haltung*, a posture-cum-attitude consubstantial with an *interest*, which is not to be disjoined from certain kinds of emotion. The second one is a general view of emotions which uses, among other approaches, some feminist-materialist argumentation (primarily of Alison Jaggar) and insights by Brecht. Though there are some serious—even if not central—blind spots in Brecht's treatment of the female gender in life or in effigy, he had an understanding of personality that refused the patriarchal or militaristic downgrading of emotion as well as its philistine (Hollywoodian, Disneyfied) misuse. The notion that his work is unemotional, or split between reason and emotion, is obsolete and misleading. The two lines are united in the pivotal distinction between empathy and sympathy which I think ought

¹ The terminology about emotion is a jungle of competing disciplinary or indeed personal semantics, so that anybody venturing upon it must hew out her own path and stick to it, or founder. Thus, one school holds that "feeling" encompasses both psychological emotions and physiological affects; "passion" started out in Latin as passive suffering (as in the Passion of Jesus), it is in English and French generally regarded as intensely goal-directed; or, "pathos" is in English a theatrical and not quite genuine representation of emotion. The situation in other languages, such as German, is not less but differently intricate—see note 6.

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For reasons of space I am not discussing here Brecht's personal relationships to women, about which much misleading and simply wrong stuff has been written. The most balanced books on this theme seem to me those by Kebir (see the four titles in *Works Cited*), about which I have written in *Brecht Yearbook* (Suvin, "A Very" and "Sabine Kebir").

² See Suvin, "*Haltung*" and "*Haltung* (Bearing)." I find with pleasure that this conclusion was arrived at earlier by Dümmling (626), whose excellent book is most useful for discussing Brecht's bearings—not only as concerns music.

to be extrapolated from Brecht's stance and writings, and in an indication about Brecht's thinking about the Subject.

1. On *Haltung*

Toward evening, Brecht found me in his garden reading *Capital*. Brecht: "I find it very good that you are now studying Marx—when he's met with ever less frequently, and especially among our people." I answered that I preferred to take up the frequently mentioned books when they were not in fashion.

Benjamin, *Talks With Brecht*, diary note of 25/7/1938

1.1. It is well known that Brecht wanted to develop a thinking capable of intervention into relationships among people through the condensed and displaced guise of poetry and art. In order to do this he needed a mediation which would be sufficiently incisive without being simply doctrinal ideology. In my reading, the *red thread or central insight that unites all the periods and all the genres of his work and life was the concept of Haltung* (imperfectly translated as *bearing or stance*). It seems to me a fruitful polysemy or pun, centrally involving *dynamics* and *full bodily involvement*. Brecht claimed "to have renewed the language of literature ... by putting only stances into sentences and letting the stances always appear through the sentences" (18:78-79); and that in his "dialectical dramaturgy" the stage should be composed of groupings "in which or toward which the single person assumes particular stances" while the audience groups change their stances and grow into productive co-workers by studying and judging the stage stances (21:440-42). There are two principal ways in which Brecht sought to particularize this overarching concept by finding sociohistorically pertinent macro-stances. As of about 1928, he formulated it around the concept of a redefined *pedagogy*, centrally related to enjoyment, but after his emigration this concept was dropped and replaced by meanings clustering around a redefined notion of *production*, productivity or productive critique. (He also used the concept of science: it was foregrounded in his *Short Organum for the Theatre*, but finally abandoned as "too polluted" [23:289], while retaining the insistence on a necessarily experimental, Baconian character of genuinely modern art.)

I shall reluctantly mention, from the *Haltung* of pedagogy (see Suvin, "Brecht: Bearing"), only that it was fundamentally inimical to a closed "world view" or a learning through systematized notional constructs which tend to build up a doctrine that will, in Brecht's

opinion, necessarily have a false harmony and univocity. He aimed at a critical appropriation of a way of thinking, of a *method*, incarnated in the players' bearing (cf. "On the Theory of the Lehrstück," 22.1:351-52, Steinweg *Lehrstück* 102, and Jameson *Brecht*). For Brecht, "The concept of the right way is less good than that of the right walking" (22.1:569). He hated one-way transmission: while he was constructing a theory of pedagogy, he was also planning a radio theory whose main plank was the demand for two-way teaching communication between the radio performers and the listeners. Another *Me-ti* story goes so far as to say, "If anybody affirms that 2×2 equals 4 because $8 - 5$ equals 7, I shall immediately say that twice two is not four.... I cannot stand it when truth is believed or spoken like a lie, without proof or out of calculation" (18:110-11). The clear polemical point here also goes against official Marxism in Stalin's time.

Brecht is astonishingly modern in such considerations, pitting the juggler-philosopher as educator against the priest, and again best exemplified by some *Me-ti* stories. One of them distinguishes between experiences and judgements, and calls for great caution not to take the latter for the former:

A proper technique is necessary to keep the experiences fresh so that they can remain a permanent source of new judgements. —*Me-ti* called the kind of experiences best which resembled snowballs. They can serve as good weapons but they do not keep too long. For example they cannot be held ready in the pocket for long. (18:90-91)

1.2. *The Haltung of Producing: Productivity and Love.*

Brecht remained constantly committed to teaching and learning, but the Nazi victory in 1933 deprived him of any chances for teaching with the help of an organized societal network. Furthermore, Nazism interacted with Stalinism to remove from the historical agenda the early Soviet experiments with plebeian democracy from below and a gradual elimination of State apparatus. In the new situation Brecht shifted his stress on organized learning to the method and bearing of a productive critique, or of a *critical productivity*.

My thesis in this section is that in the Marxist tradition, beginning with Marx himself, there are two largely incompatible but intimately associated meanings of "production": the economic one, taken from Adam Smith, and the anti-alienating or creative meaning which is part of Marx's central utopian critique, taken from a revolutionary fusion of Enlightenment and Romanticism (see Suvin, "Living"); and furthermore,

that Brecht largely and very originally moved from the first to the second meaning. These two meanings may be associated with Marx's central opposition, beginning with the *Grundrisse*, between exchange-value and use-value, in which the inherent limit of capitalism is precisely restriction of production of use-values by exchange-value and, as its obverse, the growth of productive forces at the expense of the "*main force of production, the human being itself*" (this is discussed further in Suvin "Transubstantiation" 104-05; cf. Harvey 2, 105, and *passim*). In these circumstances, as the young Hegel had already noted, "The value of labour decreases in the same proportion as the productivity of labour increases" (239). Marx's examples for production in the first sense are all quantifiable productions founded on capital and produced for profit. In this case, Marx insisted that this is "not a production for people as people, that is, it is not a *social* production that includes pleasure in the other's product" (*Ergänzungsband* 459). Most interestingly, his examples for qualitative production in the second sense, not reducible to profit, are actors producing a play, piano players producing not only music but also our musical ear, and the madman producing delusions. Artistic production is indeed (together with scientific production) taken as a paradigm for such non-alienated production of use-values.

References to creative production in Brecht's writing become especially frequent from 1940 on. His non-Aristotelian theatre is now defined as "simply one with a spectator who produces the world," and using for the basis of its emotions, alongside curiosity and helpfulness, "human productivity, the noblest of them all" (26:439 and 441-42). "Learning" is now equivalent to "mental producing" (22.1:63). The key passage, which explicitly identifies production as non-economistic productivity, seems to be a notation from March 7, 1941:

The great error which has prevented me from making the little Lehrstück of *The Evil, Asocial Baal* was my definition of socialism as a *great order*. It is, on the contrary, much more practical to define it as a *great production*. Production is, of course, to be taken in the widest sense, and the struggle is about the full unfettering of everybody's productivity. The products may be bread, lamps, hats, pieces of music, chess moves, irrigation, complexion, character, plays, etc. (26:468)

The concept of an all-sided deployment of productivity is explicitly extended to love too, wittily including a "production strike," in a note from 1949. In a characteristic move, this begins with a counterproposal to (or, ambiguously, amplification of—at any rate in a supersession of)

Lenin's famous dictum that communists deduce their morality from their struggle (adopted by Brecht as late as 1931 in *The Measures Taken*) and ends by punning on the theatrical sense of *sich produzieren*, "showing off" and/or "producing itself":

If one wishes to deduce all morality from productivity and one sees the highest thing in a huge development of everybody's productivity, one must take care to lift the interdict from mere existence, indeed from the resistance against being used. I love: I make the beloved productive; I repair a car: I make the drivers drive; I sing: I ennoble the hearing of the hearer, etc. etc. But then society has to have the ability to use everything, it must possess such a "capital" of what has already been produced, such a plenty of offers, that the individual's production becomes as if a superfluous, so to speak an unexpected thing. If productivity is the highest thing, then strikes must still be honoured. (In the esthetic domain it is already so. The asocial element also pleases; it is taken as sufficient that it "produces itself.") (27:305)

Possibly around 1954, planning a series of songs for a play on the Chinese God of Happiness, Brecht noted: "The highest happiness is called productivity" (BBA 204/71, in Tatlow 546). When first thinking of this cycle, he had also noted it should be an entirely materialist work, "praising 'the good life' (in both senses). Eating, drinking, dwelling, sleeping, loving, working, thinking, the great pleasures" (27:159). Though he probably didn't know the works of young Marx, the parallel to Marx's "Seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, feeling, thinking, opining, perceiving, willing, being active, loving" (*Ergänzungsband* 539), is striking.

At some points, thus, in the *Short Organum*, Brecht was inclined to call the basic societal bearing of this productivity simply criticism or critique. Such a critical *Haltung* (22.1:226) or productive critique is "the grandest characteristic of a human being, it has created most of the goods of happiness, best improved life" (22.1:569). Therefore, "[productivity] may prove the greatest pleasure of them all" (23:73).

Two consequences following on this stance should be briefly invoked. First, the lovers' friendliness and the producers' good humour are conducive to a "joyous criticism" (22.2:696) which is not too far from Nietzsche's joyous knowledge and quite near to Bakhtin's gay plebeian truth. An autonomous creative force of socialized humanity, productivity as pleasure is its own measure. At best, a kind of qualitative felicific calculus may be applied to it, as in: "The proposition: *A man's*

goal is to have pleasure is bad because it boxes the ear of the good proposition: *Humankind's goal is to have pleasure*" (23:361). Second, the presupposition for all such constructive production is the destruction of destructivity, best shown in his *Caucasian Chalk Circle*: "The more Grushe furthers the child's life, the more she endangers her own; *her productivity works for her own destruction*" (italics mine). This is so under the conditions of war, of the existing jurisprudence, of her isolation and poverty" (24:346).

1.3. In Sum.

If one is now to inquire into the reason and meaning of Brecht's redefining the semantics of *Haltung* and allotting to this stance or bearing a central role in his work and approach to the world, my thesis would be: *Haltung is Brecht's semantic micro-unit of praxis for the active subject*. In conscious opposition to several important social usages, it has simultaneously three functions: 1) it refuses the bourgeois and individualistic concepts of an internalized and atomic character; 2) it everts the Right-wing, militaristic-cum-servile stress on *Strammhalten* (standing at attention, a metonymy for rigid behaviour—see Nägele 141-57), wresting it away from statics and hierarchy; 3) it provides an alternative to the faceless "economics as last instance of all behaviour" in orthodox "Historical Materialism" from Engels through Kautsky to Stalin. As such a witty alternative, *Haltung* mediates between two uses of "intervening thinking": in practical relationships of people to each other and in systematic cognition about people.

The anti-individualistic function of *Haltung* is of a piece with the dismantling of the "individual" or the monolithic Self as center of the universe. This is a central theme of Brecht's, foregrounded in his work from *Man is Man* and *Mahagonny* to *The Good Person of Setzuan*: "the destruction, explosion, atomisation of the individual psyche is a fact." What remains is, however, not at all a Nothing—"lack of nucleus does not mean lack of substance, we have thus a new structure in front of us, which has to be determined in new ways" (26:476)—but subjects capable of action or agency as Marxian "ensembles of social relationships." All of Brecht's figures are confronted with situations of choice, all are bipolar agents (saying yes and no), types like the *Charaktermasken* in Marx's *18th Brumaire*, with flexibly allegorical behaviours and orientations. Possibly the two most important types are the true intellectual or "the Thinker"—Keuner, Me-ti, Azdak—and the ambiguously perverted variant of Johanna Dark and Galileo; and the motherly one: Wlassowa, Katrin, Courage (fully perverted case), Shen Te, Grusche.

Thus, Brecht was constantly preoccupied with *Haltung* as a practical and cognitive tool that ensures the naming—and bestowal of meaning—of a subject's body-orientation. As could be seen also from the “Tu Wishes to Learn Fighting and Learns Sitting” story from his *Me-ti*, the foregrounded materiality of the movements and postures is not only a sign for the orientation of the thinking but also its almost magical induction and guarantee. In other words: the sensual Being-Thus in a given changeable situation is the guarantee that the acting subject in an always already concrete existence will avoid, by means of her enjoyment and critical evaluating, being sacrificed to fetishized abstractions—for example, “the future,” “the struggle”—but will instead assume a fertile, sensual, and therefore unshakable orientation toward them. Brecht's fascination with “The Helper” (or Enabler) finally conjoins the “motherly” women (cf. Ruddick) with Azdak or the sage teacher figures, as they all take practical measures to combine the difficult today with a productive tomorrow. The best presentation of this stance may be found in Brecht's probably most optimistic text, the *Caucasian Chalk Circle*, where a brief Saturnalian interregnum suspending class power allows Azdak to help himself—for example, to drink and sex—and to help as well the embodied seeds of the future—Grushe and the Noble Child (see Suvin *To Brecht*, chap. 6).

For these reasons, *Haltung* proved similar to some other attempts on the Left to fuse theory and everyday practice. Most similar to it are Benjamin's use of the same term, first independent of and then in dialogue with Brecht, Gramsci's notion of “philosophy of practice,” and Straus's notions of “upright posture” combined in Bloch with orientation toward a horizon. Lukács's use of standpoint in *History and Class Consciousness* is characteristically more abstract but has allowed, even so, highly interesting reinterpretations by materialist feminists and by “theologians of liberation” as “the privileged standpoint of the women” respectively “of the poor” (cf. on both, Jameson “History”). There are also parallels to Bakhtin, Sartre, and Merleau-Ponty, as well to Bourdieu's “habitus.”

2. *An Orientation about Emotion*

...this concept too we shall have to clean before using,
as an ancient concept, used much and by many people
and for many purposes. Brecht, 22.1:408

2.1. I shall start by paraphrasing what I take to be the most reasonable

mainstream interpretation of emotion by Mandler (66-71 and *passim*), supplemented by Bruner: An emotion is the name given to an aspect of personal life that arises as interaction between a general situation, as a rule involving other people, and a pre-existing personal (single or collective) disposition. A sharp demand from the situation is interpreted or reworked by the individual—who understands it as a given overall intimation or *Gestalt*—into bodily arousal, with outputs both to consciousness (conceptual thought, and resulting self-perception) and to response readiness. I conclude that emotion (subjects being affected by subjects) is an intricately intertwined obverse of action (subjects affecting other subjects). The central question about emotions today is how they permit or hinder which actions.

Briefer and more primitive emotions are often called affects. Emotions of longer duration, which are usually also less simple, result when action is for a while interrupted. Such emotions also have an evaluative, clearly cognitive, dimension. They have to do with how a person's activity or state relates to her/his whole embodied personality, its life-horizons, values, and (dis)pleasures (cf. Wolf 113-14), and in particular its bearing or stance. My approach also adopts Jaggar's working delimitation of emotions which excludes "automatic physical responses and nonintentional sensations, such as hunger pangs" ("Love" 148). Most important, emotions are not in some kind of totally non-rational limbo or "dumb"; in this "cognitivist" view, they comprise not only feelings but also orientation or *intention*, "their intentional aspect, the associated judgement" (ibidem 149).³

As emotions participate in the cognitive process they are often affected by its categorizations, arguments, and organization⁴: they may be intensified or softened, diffused to the whole process or dwarfed into insignificance. It is not useful but scandalous to apply to them

³ Most philosophical approaches from Husserl on, especially after 1950, would generally agree with the view that emotions are intentional, that is, in part constituted by cognition and evaluation, cf. Rorty and Stocker; illustrious precursors of such a stance would include Rousseau. From this it follows that people can be held responsible for acting on the basis of emotions. But it does not follow that emotion, though in principle or potentially cognitive, is to be simply identified with reason; an interesting argument is that it supplements inadequate (for example, too slow) reasoning, see de Sousa.

⁴ See Rosch for an introduction to the literature on categorization, and Johnson for an interesting complementary approach on "kinesthetic image schemas." Even the ultra-formalist Kripke allows that feeling is essential to concepts, since all conscious mental states are inseparable from a raw feel of experience, while the psychologist Lazarus has in extensive discussions (I cite the latest I found) argued that a situational appraisal of personal significance is indispensable for an emotion.

the hackneyed, and obfuscating Christian and bourgeois division where reason is seen as masculine, analytic, proper to the mind, cold, objective and universal, sane, public, and orderly, while emotion would be feminine, synthetic, proper to the body, warm, subjective and particular, sick, private, and politically untrustworthy. From the stance adopted here (which attempts to find a way amid a jungle of contrasting opinions), what may today be tenable views on emotion? I shall touch upon four points.

First, the hegemonic notion about emotions is that they must be largely involuntary and private: but in fact they are never only such. In the most significant cases (including the exemplary case of art), they are active engagements of the whole personality, psychophysical stances. The emotions are so intimately interfused into personality that only to a rather limited degree are we entitled to disclaim responsibility for them. They are necessary concomitants of any horizon of action, including fear of and horror at actions. This is particularly true for long-term emotions (such as the “long rage” Mother Courage discusses with the Young Soldier in Scene 4 of that play). Once we have refused the pernicious Cartesian split between the *cogito* and the sensual body, it is possible to see that emotions are neither fully intentional and conscious nor fully non-intentional and irrational; “[r]ather, they are ways in which we engage actively and even construct the world” (Jaggar, “Love” 152-53 and *passim*).

Second, as Brecht realized, among the fundamental categories when discussing any psychology geared toward action are *evaluation*, *observation*, and finally *intention*. They are not to be sundered from each other, and furthermore all of them are closely related to emotions. This seems clear for value-judgements, which are in constant feedback with emotion. In complex ways, this holds for observation too, which is also deeply enmeshed with intentions (*interests*), from the primary choices—what to focus on, and privilege—to the interpretive frames chosen: “Observation is an activity of selection and interpretation.” Thus Hume’s chasm between value and fact is denied. In a given situation, by given agents, what will be taken for facts depends on “intersubjective agreements that consist partly in shared assumptions about ‘normal’ or appropriate emotional responses to situations” (Jaggar, “Love” 154).

Third, at least some determining factors of any emotion participate also in a collective social engagement that is at that juncture possible to sketch out or imagine. While probably sharing other factors with “long duration” (though not eternal and “intrinsically human”) emotional stances, a particular and personal emotion is always also a historical and social *Gestalt*, a construct not fully or even decisively determined

by genes or neurobiology. This is particularly clear in connection with the value-judgements, intention, and interests just discussed (cf. Brecht 22.2:657-59). Emotions are social constructs which use biological potentialities in a number of ways, culturally overdetermined in Althusser's sense. The concept itself of emotion is not only different in different societies but indeed invented as a closed semantic field only in some of them. I would cite, for instance, that in Japanese culture the term and concept of *kokoro* means equally what is in English expressed by a person's disposition, heart, mind, feeling, spirit or conception, that is, something like the aware and feeling essence of personality (since the East Asian cultural sphere has no Christian concept of "soul," awareness is awareness of one's embodied personality, not split between reason and emotions—cf. Suvin "Soul"). Jaggar argues that "[i]f emotions necessarily involve judgements, then obviously they require concepts, which may be seen as socially constructed ways of organizing and making sense of the world" ("Love" 151). Though the concepts we use today for emotions may often not be very clear, certainly emotions are in each person hugely inflected by the semantic hierarchies we are socialized into (for example, the undoubtedly strong macho emotions about female virginity or chastity). Further, "emotions provide the experiential basis for values" (and value judgements), so that these two induce each other (ibidem 153), in a close feedback, while they remain intimately inflected by concepts.

Last but not least, our lives are largely shaped by a complex societal hegemony, that includes the determinations by political economy as well as direct political control and social group control; or, in the argument of Raymond Williams, "in effect a saturation of the whole process of living.... It [hegemony] is a whole body of practices and expectations, over the whole of living: *our senses and assignments of energy*, our shaping perceptions of ourselves and our world. It is a *lived system of meanings and values...*" (109-10, emphasis added; see also his crucial hypothesis of a "structure of feeling," 132-34). Fortunately, within any hegemony many people possess a range of oppositional, subversive, and potentially productive emotions incompatible with dominant perceptions and evaluations. Such emotions may follow on our convictions or they may indeed precede them—say, when "all feelings are dominated by unemployment" (Brecht 19:668). However, "Only when we reflect on our initially puzzling irritability, revulsion, anger or fear may we bring to consciousness our 'gut-level' awareness that we are in a situation of coercion, cruelty, injustice or danger" (Jaggar, "Love" 161).

2.2. In sum, it is necessary to rethink the relation between reason (in the sense of systematized concepts) and emotion as mutually constitutive rather than oppositional. Far from precluding the possibility of reliable knowledge, emotion as well as value must be shown as necessary to knowledge (Jaggar, “Love” 156-57). One good example is Brecht’s reflection on the personal roots of his exile:

When I reflect on what *Mitgehen* [fellow travelling, falling into step, with an allusion on *Mitfühlen*—DS] has led me to and in what ways a stress on examining has helped me, I must counsel the latter. Had I succumbed to the former stance, I would still be living in my homeland, but had I not taken up the latter stance, I would not be an honest person. (26:308)

A second one is his *Me-Ti* section “Examining the Emotions”:

In our youth, said Me-ti, we were taught not to trust reason, and that was good. But we were also taught to trust our feelings, and that was bad. The source of our emotions is just as contaminated as the source of our judgements: for it is just as accessible to people’s designs and therefore continually polluted by ourselves and others....

To assume there are emotions without reason means to understand reason wrongly. (18:138-39; see also Bruner 117-18)

As to reason, Brecht observed that “people do much that is reasonable yet does not pass through their *Verstand* [formal reasoning—DS]” (22.2:825). As noted at the beginning, he believed that systematized notional constructs necessarily tend toward a closed doctrine, entailing a false harmony and ideological univocity (for example 21:414-17): “The learner is more important than the doctrine” (21:531) was Brecht’s central orientation. In such considerations, he is an astonishingly early pioneer of a reintegration of the body, with all its senses (as the young Marx also was), into the practice and theory of our knowledge: the body is for Brecht the co-determining anchorage for stance. A stance is present, I think, in all personal and possessive pronouns, all *deixis*, and all metaphors of vision and orientation. It allowed him finally to conclude: “Such a thinking... does not oppose feeling.... It seems to me now simply a kind of behaviour, namely a societal behaviour. The whole body with all the senses participates in it” (22.2:753). This dovetails well with Merleau-Ponty (*Phénoménologie*, also *Structure*), for whom embodiment is both a lived experience of being body and a realization

that the body is the site of cognition or understanding, which is itself inextricably tied to embodied action as preparation, surrogate, response or feedback validation.

To put all of this into technical terms: while emotion may be ontogenetically and phylogenetically prior to conceptuality, it is axiologically a necessary, intimate component of all reasoning or cognition. In our personal lives, emotions may follow on our conceptualized convictions or they may precede them. In any event, the feedback between emotions and conscious reflecting on them is necessary for any efficient intervening into societal reality—and particularly for societal groups struggling for the oppressed (cf. Jaggar, “Love” 162).

2.3. This means, in turn, that the “epistemic potential of emotion” (“Love” 163) has to be taken seriously if any stance is to be stable (cf. also Hartsock; Jaggar, *Feminist*; Jameson; Lukács; Suvin, “On Cognitive,” “Subject,” and *To Brecht*, ch. 4). A potential does not confer any magical efficacy on emotions as compared to concepts. Both may be erroneous; both need subsequent validation, though possibly in incommensurable ways (for example, asymmetrically, by each other). Although our emotions are epistemologically indispensable, they are not epistemologically indisputable. Like all our faculties, they may be misleading, and their data, like all data, are always subject to reinterpretation and revision (Jaggar, “Love” 163).

However, even more radically, I propose querying the terms of debate (see Suvin, “On Cognitive”). Rather than speak about emotion vs. reason, it might be useful to say that *the class of “not conceptually expressibles” is not cognitively empty*: for example, that a quartet, a sculptural frieze, a theater or video performance, a metaphoric system or indeed a personal emotional configuration (*Gestalt*) may be no less cognitive (if in different ways) than a conceptual system. Obviously there may and will be cognitively empty or banal symphonies, paintings, metaphors, and emotions galore, just as there are concepts and conceptual systems galore to which almost all of us would deny a cognitive status: 20th-Century Great Man charismatics are cognitively neither better nor worse than, say, sociobiology or “Creation theory,” since all zeros tend to be equal. Obversely, both the conceptual and the non-conceptual ways of understanding, when they are actualized epistemic potentials and not institutionalized mimics, may *allow people to deal with alternatives*, that is, with not merely or fully present objects, aspects, and relationships. The entities which were not present to people’s perception and reflection

now become available for evaluative inspection, choice, and subsequent intervention by means of a cognitive organon: conceptual, emotional or whichever.

In this hypothesis, what counts as understanding, cognition or knowledge? Anything, I would maintain, that satisfies two conditions or, better, two aspects of one condition: that it can help us in coping with our personal and collective existence; and that it can be validated by feedback with its application, modifying existence and being modified by it. I see no permanent or “anthropological” reason to allot (or withdraw) a special privilege to any human activity or faculty here—for example, to words, numbers, geometrical figures, arranged sounds, concepts, metaphors, movements or what have you—though it might almost go without saying that particular social groups, in particular historical chronotopes, will always have specially privileged activities and sign-systems.

3. *On Emotion in Brecht*

Few statements about art have so struck me as Meier-Graefe’s one about Delacroix: In him a hot heart beat in a cold person.

Brecht, *Tagebuch* 1922, 26:270

3.1. The publishing and journalistic cliché of “Bertolt Brecht—The ‘Classic of Reason’”—has misled a whole generation of German schoolkids into shunning him. However, the appellation is either false—if reason is opposed to emotion—or unclear—if it is not argued what “Reason” may mean for and in Brecht, and what his stance toward and use of emotions really were. In an attempt to find this out, I collected some 50 propositions overtly mentioning feeling or emotion to be found in the 33 volumes of Brecht’s latest giant collected edition. Among these, I have found *two or three* early ones which indeed oppose “emotio” to “ratio,” culminating in the “Notes to the Opera *Mahagonny*” written by him and Peter Suhrkamp in 1930 (24:74-84). This one example has been cited again and again, probably because the notes were not only provocatively pointed and thus brief and clear but also because they were the only proof that *could* be found for Brecht as “the classic of reason” in the narrow sense. It contained a memorable Kantian table with two opposed columns, of which the last one opposed “Emotion [*Gefühl*]” to “Reason [*Ratio*].” Though Brecht had warned that his table marked a change of stress rather than a rigid metaphysical opposition, it was singled out for strong attacks not only by bourgeois conservatives but

primarily by Lukács and his followers within the German Communist Party press. Rethinking the matter, Brecht noted around 1931 a proposal of *The Mother* that his epic presentation “does not renounce emotional effect: in fact, its emotions are only clarified... and have nothing to do with intoxication” (22.1:162). And in 1938, he rewrote the above table, suppressing the final opposition between emotion and reason (24:85—see more in my “*Haltung* [Bearing]”).

Furthermore, in an important letter in July 1939 to a “comrade M,” Brecht commented:

These are notes to theatre performances and thus written in a more or less polemical vein. They do not contain full definitions and therefore often lead the student to misunderstandings which prevent him from working with them in a theoretically productive way. In particular, the *opera article* about *Mahagonny* needs some additions in order for the discussion to become fruitful. People have read out of it that I take the part “against the emotional and for the rational.” This is, of course, not so. I would not know how thoughts could be separated from emotions. Not even that part of contemporary literature which seems to be written without reason (*Verstand*) really separates intelligence from emotion. In it, the emotional is just as rotten as the rational....

I would not write you all this had my works not in fact contained formulations which may push the debate toward a direction from which nothing follows. For, a discussion about “emotion or reason” obscures the main result that can be found in my works (or better attempts): *that a phenomenon so far held as esthetically constitutive, the EMPATHY, has lately been more or less dispensed with in some works of art.* (This obviously does not mean at all that emotion has been dispensed with.) (29:149-50)

This is a crucial clarification. Any discussion of Brecht’s stance toward emotions can only be fruitful if it begins by taking this letter seriously.

Thus, Brecht had very soon retreated from any rhetoric against emotion. In 1940 he concluded that his theatre “uses also a critique based on emotions (*gefühlsmässige*)” (26:438). This obviously holds for many other passages and figures of his plays and poems—always clearly delimited and de-automatized, which means wrested away from philistine sentimentality. Slighting here many other testimonies from Brecht’s emigration years, such as his major theoretical writings *The Messingkauf Dialogues* and *A Short Organon for the Theatre*, I shall cite

here only two diary notes. In their brevity, they seem to me to constitute the two parts of his final, balanced view. The first part deals with the art of theatre, and the second with the art of living.

In the diary note from Nov. 15, 1940, Brecht defined his theatre—"for a change" not with the usual "bad definitions as especially intellectualistic" but "in emotional categories":

This is possible without any problems, since in the epic theatre the emotional line and the intellectual line remain identical in the actor and in the spectator. It would be necessary [for such a defining] to build on the basis of curiosity and helpfulness a set of emotions which balances the set based on terror and pity. Of course, there are other bases for emotions too. There is above all human productivity, the noblest of them all. (26:441)

A whole Brechtian theory of personality, including emotionality, could be reconstructed around this basic stance of productivity. It is variously associated not only with curiosity but also with happiness, friendliness, and "indignation, this socially highly productive affect" (27:140). As a paradigm of productivity, Brecht identified love: "Love is the art of producing something with the capacities of another person. To this purpose one needs regard and affection from the other person" (18:40—see on this theme, Haffad).

Finally, Brecht could quite consistently announce, in the note of March 4, 1941, "that one must get out of the militant position of 'emotion vs. reason'":

The relationship of *ratio* to *emotio* in all its contradictoriness should be exactly researched, and one should not allow our opponents to present epic theater as simply rational and anti-emotional. [On the one hand, "i]n instincts" which, automatized reactions to experiences, have become opposed to our interests. Muddled, one-track emotions, no longer controlled by reason. On the other hand the emancipated *ratio* of the physicists with their mechanical formalism.... The epic principles guarantee a critical stance in the audience, but this stance is eminently emotional. This critique is not to be confused with a critique in an exclusive scientific sense, it is much more inclusive, not at all specialized (*fachbegrenzt*), much more practical and elementary. (26:467)

3.2. Early on, Brecht certainly indulged in provocatively one-sided exaggerations to shock the bourgeois, and then changed his mind under

the pressure of experience. Talking to Benjamin, he confessed in 1934 that his thinking had at times an “inflammatory” stance (GS 6:531), and in 1938 he further explained: “It is good when one who has taken up an extreme position is overtaken by a reactionary period; one gets then to a location in the middle” (GS 6:535). Brecht was uncommonly aware of the pressures of bloody politics in our century:

Fascism, with its grotesque stress on the emotional, and perhaps no less a certain decadence of the rational moment in the Marxist doctrine stimulated me to a stronger stress on the rational. Nonetheless, precisely the most rational form, the “play for learning” (*Lehrstück*), shows the most emotional effects.

(22.1:500)

A constant tenor of Brecht’s may be found in his defense of a certain type of flexible but critical reason, refusal of uncritical submersion in both stupidity and corrupt emotions, and attempt at contradictory reconciliations of emotion and reason in a proper stance (cf. for example, 26:324-25 and 28:564-65). Thus, if we want to make full use of Brecht’s insights for our orientation today, I think at last three directions of further work are indicated.

The first direction would be to find out at least approximately what were in his opinion the emotions within “the set based on” curiosity, helpfulness, and indignation—indeed, sometimes based on “a mixture of pleasure and horror (which should not exist, no?)” or on “pioneering adventurousness” (22.1:418 and 559). I believe a central place would be taken by a carefully weighted spread of emotional stances (see 21:99 already in 1921)—but never indifference. Two pivots of such a spread could be the central stance of Brecht’s late period—*friendliness*—and his almost always practiced though not so often discursively stressed category (but cf. 22.2:810-11 and 817) of *grace* uniting “passion and reason”—as in his proposed anthem, for which one much regrets it isn’t the German national anthem today (as it wasn’t in the GDR):

Anmut sparet nicht noch Mühe
Leidenschaft nicht noch Verstand
Dass ein gutes Deutschland blühe
Wie ein andres gutes Land.

(“Kinderhymne,” 12:303)

I cannot translate his gracious force here but will put it into rhyming prose at least:

Spare not any toil nor grace
 Spare not passion nor reason
 That a good Germany, as any good place,
 Might come to its flowering season.

The second direction of investigation should be to approach Brecht's central stance that productivity encompasses love and that love is a production; I have done so in "Brecht: Bearing" and in 1.2 above.

A third direction would be to find out how in Brecht's practice (of performances, poetry, and prose writings) differing emotions flexibly interact with each other and with notional propositions in precise places and precise dosages of emphasis.

3.3. Brecht is much exercised with flexibility and a Daoist softness winning over rigidity (this is perhaps most memorably encapsulated in his poem *Legend on the Coming About of the "Tao-te-king" Book*). I believe the strategic tension and opposition to be focused upon is one between the dethroning of illusionistic, sentimental, uncritical, pseudo-compassionate empathy (*Einfühlung*—see the cited 1939 letter, and other testimonies in GBFA, volumes 22-23 and 26-27, mostly adduced in my "*Haltung* [Bearing]") and a possibly intense but always reasonable sympathy. This opposition between *Einfühlung* and *Mitgefühl*—empathy and sympathy—found in Brecht's poetic, scenic, and other artistic (as well as practical) stances, to which I now turn, may be applicable to empirical behaviour.

4. On Empathy vs. Sympathy: A Matter of Critical Distance

Emotions too participate in critique, maybe it is precisely your task to organize critique through emotions. Brecht, *Messingkauf Dialogues*, 22.2:751
 Surprise and [spatial or temporal] distance... are both equally necessary for comprehending what surrounds you... so evidently that you can no longer see it clearly.

Braudel, "History and the Social Sciences"

4.1. In Brecht's Germany, the most important treatment of emotions pertaining vaguely to "sympathy" or "vicarious understanding," that is, to orientation toward other people, was Max Scheler's intricate and

at the time authoritative discussion. Today Scheler's analysis seems in places obsolete, unclear, and even obfuscating, but I propose to dig out the following indications for my purposes.

Scheler sharply differentiates fellow-feeling (*Mitgefühl*) both from commiserating with (*Mitleiden*)—or rejoicing with (*Mitfreude*)—and from a mere distanced reproduction (*Nachvollzug*) of others' feelings or experiences with no participation in them. On the one hand, in a putative imitation or reproducing we feel the *general quality* of the other's sorrow or rejoicing without suffering or rejoicing with him. The other's feeling is given at a remove, represented "like a landscape which we 'see' subjectively in memory, or a melody which we 'hear' in similar fashion" (9/20). Of course, this already presupposes an initial grasping of the fact that other people have their own experiences. However, while it remains unclear how this "intuitable intrinsic connection between individual and experience" works between two agents, it does not necessarily involve empathy on the part of the percipient (me). The other person has "an individual self distinct from our own," which "we can never fully comprehend..., steeped as it is in its own psychic experience." We can only have "our own view of it..., conditioned as this is by our own individual nature" (10/21). Scheler therefore polemicizes expressly against any theory of "projective empathy"⁵ based on identity between individuals, or on Schopenhauer's metaphysics of unified Being as against illusory individuation (51/66), in which the Other, subject to suffering, is "another I." On the other hand, in fellow-feeling "a genuine experience takes place in me... *similar* to that which occurs in the other person..., " but not at all identical—not even in a perhaps briefer or weaker form (11/22).

Thus, we find here two extremes: total lack of interest and contact (infinite distance), and total fusion of feeling and will (zero distance). Somewhere in between the two extremes, there is a middle area which Scheler calls fellow-feeling. Full spiritual and practical entrusting of oneself to a cause and/or a person, say in religious or crypto-religious identification such as nationalism and fascism, he calls "emotional contagion" (14/25ff). Again, he discusses it in rather unclear ways, while rightly pointing out that as a rule "belief in" a charismatic person is quite different from any arguable "belief that" (86/96). It is here that Brecht's contribution, and the vectors based on it that can be carried further, may prove of central importance. To foreshadow: Brecht himself wanted to wean people from "feeling together with (*mitzufinden*)"

⁵ On Lipps's "projective empathy" and the history of the term up to and including Brecht, see Weber.

by incarnating themselves in the hero, in favour of “a higher kind of interest: the one in similes, in the other, the incalculable, the surprising” (26:271; cf. 21:534).

I conclude that what is useful today is to distinguish three stances: indifference without emotion; full emotional contagion (in sorrow or joy), which is usually called empathy; and a flexible fellow-feeling, which I propose to call *sympathy*. This can be best discussed in terms of cognitive (both notional and emotional) distance between the percipient and the perceived, the observer and the observed events.

4.2. *Distance* is an indispensable constituent and component of all understanding. It is a metaphor by which space is used for a moral and/or cognitive tenor when dealing with the psychological experience of involvement with events or existents, primarily other people and their actions. It presupposes an awareness of their separateness; as Simmel put it, distance is crucial “in order to cognize the specific meaning (*Eigenbedeutung*) of things.... The object... is juxtaposed to us only insofar as it is not merely included into our relationship to it” (*Philosophie* 41-42; see also *Grundfragen* 11-12).⁶

I believe Brecht’s “Estrangement” (*Verfremdungs-Effekt*, NOT alienation!) means that the spectator (and quite overtly also the social agent outside the theater) ought to take up *a distance proper for understanding* towards events and existents so that she might be surprised by their specific unlikenesses to what we know, yet aided in understanding by their generic similarities. The proper distance should fit the matter treated, oscillating as required by the situation but always somewhere within the range of Scheler’s *Mitgefühl* rather than indifference or full identification. This *sympathizing distance* (both terms of this tension being equally significant) means that the agent’s value-judgements necessarily contain both approval and critique, though in quite varying proportions according to the situation and her interests. I can here only allude to the decisive anthropological argument that experiences function in large part implicitly, so that when they cross between people, who never have quite the same presuppositions, the implications necessarily change (cf. Gendlin 399 and *passim*). A full

⁶ Simmel’s most important discussion on distance is perhaps in “The Stranger.” I am not sure that Brecht knew him; however, Brecht certainly stands here on the shoulders of Shklovsky and Nietzsche. The latter was a true dissenting pioneer in this field in many of his saws, as for example in section 35 of *Morgenröte*, “Emotions and Their Origin in Judgements.” Besides these three, in the pleasingly interdisciplinary secondary literature on distance I found useful the classical oldie Bogardus, then Blumenberg, Bullough, Ginzburg, Hall, Scarry, the survey by Phillips with a larger bibliography, and the rich materials in Osterkamp.

identification is always illusory: it is itself an illusion and it works towards a life of unrealistic illusion. My emotion may have another's ache or suffering as its intentional object, but the actual quality of the ache is inescapably my own. Already the pioneering Adam Smith had realized: "As we have no immediate experience of what other men feel, we can form no idea of the manner in which they are affected, but by conceiving what we ourselves should feel in the like situation" (I.i.1.2). Last but not least, empathy is an important method of uncritical identification in politics, most efficaciously realized by Hitler's propaganda "as a production of feelings in a colossal measure" (Anders 311)—Benjamin called it in the 1930s "empathy into the winner" (GS 1:696).

Brecht's main orientation, in line with today's most interesting anthropological psychology, is therefore a refusal of empathy as the be-all and end-all in favour of *precisely graded and argued* sympathy. Sympathy means, even etymologically, "feeling with" (as opposed to empathy's "feeling into"); as Smith argued, when rightly defined it necessarily involves reflection and imagination since it is an opinion. Brecht emphatically stated that his theater "in no way dispenses with emotions. And in particular not with the feeling for justice, the urge toward freedom and righteous anger.... The 'critical stance', to which it attempts to bring its audience, can never be too passionate for this theatre" (23:109). To the contrary, for him empathy (*Einfühlung*) is a stance brought about by "suggestion" in which "the spectator is... prevented from taking up a critical position toward the represented in proportion to the artistic efficacy of the representation" (26:437).⁷

Nonetheless, Brecht also powerfully, though sparingly, used and eventually began to theorize a *transitory* empathetic identification with some actions *where they include emotions activating the spectator*—most clearly, an indignation against the waste of human lives in oppressive situations of war or unemployment. Such an emotional identification may be found, he allowed, in many figures who reluctantly and sometimes only partially approach the right stance, but who finally do take it up. This would hold for his female protagonists Pelagea Wlassowa in *The Mother*, Joan Dark in *St. Joan of the Slaughterhouses*, and Señora Carrar in the eponymous play (22.1:161-62, 26:455, 22.2:677), as well as for Kattrin's anger and pity when she is drumming to save the city and its children in *Mother Courage and Her Children*. For Galileo, it would hold only in patches (cf. Suvin, "Heavenly").

⁷ Here Brecht was not that far from Aristotle, who in his *Rhetoric* (¶6, 2.8) rightly observes that suffering without distance is not pitiable but horrible. There can only be pity (say in theatre) when the onlooker is sufficiently near to the suffering of others yet not completely identified with it.

Thus, Brecht's work articulates a lifelong battle against hegemonic empathy. His main motive was that he witnessed in the 20th Century too many variants of polluted emotions: "The sources of [a person's] feelings and passions are just as muddled up as the sources of his cognitions" (15:295). The vampiric praxis of a passive audience emotionally "creeping into" the skin of the great as well as greatly-suffering individual on the stage who will think, feel, and live for and in lieu of any spectator, which was memorably analyzed in *The Messingkauf Dialogues*, militated against self-determination. It was quite correctly identified by Brecht as the central mechanism of a "theatricals" or consensus-bonding of fascist unity between the leader and the led. As the Nazi slogan had it, "*Der Führer denkt für uns!*" ("The Leader thinks for us!"); and High Stalinism agreed.

Alas, his concern is still very relevant. Illusionism has since shifted into the new US-led or "disneyfied" technologies of movies, and then TV and its successors (I discuss this at length in "Utopianism"). Research has shown there are many soap-opera fans who (con)fuse characters and actors, though nobody knows just how many sustain such delusions for how long: the best guesstimate I found is that perhaps 5-10% are in a "lunatic dimension" (cf. the conflicting views in Harrington-Bielby 104-10 and 120-21). The uncritical use of empathy—from hero worship to the turn to "reality as spectacle" in late imperialism—arrogantly denies the Other the status of a person who is *like me*, somebody who is in given essential aspects of need for life and justice the same as I, but also *unlike me*, having her own will and rights. Concomitant with this, my own freedom and identity are also slighted. Empathy thus remains the central mechanism for illusion(ism), a psychological and political menace. It may only be avoided by a constant interaction of knowing with not-knowing, of the already significantly understood and the now for the first time to be significantly understood.

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On the Epistemology and Pragmatics of Intercultural Theatre Studies (1997)

Sound, sound aloud/ The welcome of the orient
flood/ Into the west/ With all his beauteous
race./ ...Who... are bright,/ And full of life and
light....

Ben Jonson, *The Masque of Blackness* (1605)

The populous East, luxuriant, abounds with
glittering gems, bright pearls, aromatic spices, and
health-restoring drugs. The late-found western
world glows with unnumbered veins of gold
and silver ore.... It is the industrious merchant's
business to collect the various blessings of each
soil and climate and, with the products of the
whole, to enrich his native country.

George Lillo, *The London Merchant* (1731)

1. Syntactic Considerations

1.0. Who is speaking to whom here, in this essay?¹ Can I take it as given that our determining situation is one of a relatively small enclave, increasingly threatened in the class war from above by Post-Fordist corporate capitalists against the Keynesian response to Leninism that had allowed "humanist" or *geisteswissenschaftliche* teachers entry into middle-class and sometimes indeed upper-middle-class affluence and therefore prestige, though never entry into real power? Or can I at least make sense by focussing, metonymically, on *how* does one speak, in what terms? And what about the Speaker of this essay? I stand here as an aging male White dissenting intellectual from a marginal "Third-World" country in South Central Europe, transplanted over 30 years ago to the semi-periphery of the now fading US empire and having participated in the financial privileges of a period undergirded by some modest but still important redistribution of the GNP to the underprivileged rather than (as today) to the millionaires. How do I speak about anything here-and-now?

¹ An earlier version of this lecture, with the same title and not significantly different, was one of the introductory or general invited position papers at the Colston Symposium on Performance Studies, University of Bristol (UK), March 22, 1997.

I.I. I'll start, in formal rhetorical fashion, by defining my topic. Denegation first: I shall be speaking about theatre studies and not rituals, games, and other cognate activities. I shall focus on the theatre's meaning-bestowing or cognitive aspect. I shall not attempt anything like a methodology of intercultural theatre studies, or even a rough survey of problem areas for a "Western" theatre scholar analysing theatre of other cultures, but only one pair of inductive-deductive polarities for its *bon et mauvais usage*. I shall take it that, instead of approaching a stable ontology, we are dealing with competing definitions of an entry in the imaginary cultural encyclopedia of a given social hegemony (Eco, "Dizionario"): our verbal mode is a hypothetic imperative, and meaning is for us a given text's "'historically operative' significance or function" (Jameson, *Ideologies* 145).

Specifications second: perhaps three key terms have to be sketched in as far as possible.

First, "metaphysics"—an absolute and unhistorical use of epistemology, divorced from pragmatics. I think its use is appropriate in discourse about a subject that is always physically present, especially if physics includes the spectators' brains. In Gramsci's view, metaphysics is thinking in frozen notions valid for all times and places and angling for a systematic philosophy divided from theories of history and of politics (1417 and 1426). This leads to a philosophically Idealist succession of monads appearing through divine intervention mediated by ideology and technocracy, for example, Po-Mo "performance studies" replacing Modernist theatre studies. True, the obverse is equally pernicious, for it then means the good old, positivist *Theaterwissenschaft* of unequivocally reconstructing elite drama performances from fading playbills; but surely this is not our major problem today, and at least positivism acknowledged history is real (though rarely that it's also tricky: the Good Lord plays poker if not Russian roulette with us). Our understanding of both history and reality is necessarily finite, but I have impenitently little doubt that they are indispensable as master tropes of crucial collective experiences.

The second term I then should explain is "epistemology." I take a standard definition spliced from different handbooks, where it means the theory of cognition, hotly disputed between philosophy and psychology, dealing with the possibilities and limits of human knowledge, the analysis of conceptual and other cognitive systems, and in particular the critique of language and other sign-systems as concrete consciousness. For our purposes topological cognition, for example, a director sketching a movement for an actor, or a dancer or singer rehearsing a loose approximation of positioning his voice or her action, is necessary in all art (as well as in life).

I.2. The third term, one I privilege, is “pragmatics,” a discipline whose horizon is integration of formalized linguistics or semiotics with investigation into socialized actions. It was defined by Charles Morris as the domain of relationships between the signs and their interpreters, which clarifies the conditions under which something is taken as a sign (cf. also Levinson). It would seem that the pertinence of this to any performance, and especially to intercultural theatre studies, should be not only clear but also paramount. From Peirce, G.H. Mead, and Bühler, through Bakhtin/Voloshinov, Morris, Carnap, and the Warsaw School to the present, pragmatics has slowly been growing into an independent discipline on a par with syntactics (the domain of relationships between the signs and their formally possible combinations) and with semantics (in this sense, the domain of relations between the signs and the entities they designate). But what is more, there are strong arguments that pragmatics overarches both semantics and syntactics. For, an object or event (word, text, shape, colour, etc.—in fact, any new perception) becomes a sign only in a *signifying situation between people*; it has no “natural” meaning outside of this situation. And a user can take something to be a sign only as it is spatio-temporally concrete and localized, and as it relates to the user’s disposition toward potential action; both the concrete localization and the user’s disposition are always socio-historical.

Furthermore, signifying necessarily implies a Possible World, that is, a reality organized not only around signs but also around subjects, in the double sense of psychophysical personality and of a socialized, collectively representative subject. The potentially acting subjects reintroduce acceptance and choice, temporal duration and mutation, and a possibility of dialectical negation: only such dynamics can make the—temporary—stability of any structure meaningful. In particular, the template for intercultural construction of spacetimes is a *project*: an activity co-determined by the imagination of and intention toward a future state of affairs involving the intending subject. Present history and actions are determined by perspectives derived as much from a future as from a past (here somewhat adapted from Sartre 91-99). Both are imagined following the interests, necessities, and possibilities of given human groups. We judge the present largely in the light of our future projects as well as of a supposed tendency-latency (Bloch) or potentiality carried on from the past into today. As is the case with the past, it is always a concrete system of relationships between people in the present that endows intercultural constructions “with significance and determines which events, relations, and personages will be central, peripheral and non-existent” (Schweickart 237). All semiotic signs, up

to the macro-sign of, say, The East, have a pragmatic value based on an implicit classification stemming from the interest which they evoke in the addressee, the advantages or inconveniences, pleasures or sufferings, which they suggest in her present or expected spacetime (Bakhtin).

Thus, we need pragmatics in order to take into account the situation of a text's addressors and addressees and the whole spread of their relationships within given epistemic presuppositions, conventions, economic and institutional frames, etc. Only a pragmatic decision about pertinent presuppositions and levels of reading can make sense of a complex text, whose connotations would otherwise be practically infinite. Obversely, such pragmatic presuppositions about the signs' possible uses by their users necessarily inscribe collective reality, as understood by the users, between the lines of any "text." Realizing much of this, the early Lévi-Strauss (Structuralism with a somewhat uneasy conscience) claimed his method could exhaust all the pertinent presuppositions because his texts—the myths—came from a supposedly less complex, "cold" (tribal) society, in which the presuppositions were presumed to be frozen and finite.

*1.3. But what of our own pragmatic situation? The *épistèmè* or *Zeitgeist* of the last 25 (or is it 80?) years has bequeathed to us good news and bad news. The good news is that our understanding of reality has incurred salutary correctives. This means, among other things, for our signifying situations*

that race, class, and gender are formal principles of art, and therefore integral to textual analysis; ...that political norms are inscribed in esthetic judgment and therefore inherent in the process of interpretation; that esthetic structures shape the way we understand history...; that the task of [scholars, DS] is not just to show how art transcends culture, but also to identify and explore the ideological limits of their time.... (adapted from Bercovitch)

Correlatively, it has grown obvious (as it always was in theatre) that what is a text will be co-determined—not *exclusively* determined—by what question we wish to put to it, by the "practical pertinence" (Prieto) or relevance of both our question and the text as relating to our question. As Barthes said, "[The] Text is a methodological field... *experienced only in an activity of production*" ("Work" 157). This production is not at all confined to The Author: polytheism has replaced monotheism, the metaphor of network (Lévi-Strauss) or rhizome (Deleuze and Guattari),

a horizontal rootstock emitting new roots as it goes along, has largely replaced the metaphor of root or source. Each co-author has the right to produce her or his own Text, *on condition that it set out clearly its purposes and premises so that those premises and purposes can be evaluated and reshaped into another text by the various addressees.*

The bad news is in two parts. First, for the contemporary fashion of universalizing theory, particular cultures, never mind particular types of audiences or audience horizons, are only case-studies that have limited prestige in the “hot” world of Western intellectual communities (Gerstle 150). This is a precise equivalent of the new world order of multinational corporations (or intercultural capitalism?), based on computerized information and arms sales on top of classical extra-profits from the extraction of raw materials and labour-power not organized in trade unions. The illusion that financial transactions in cyberspace do not affect the world of “meat” (William Gibson’s elegant term) has the same deep structure as what will be discussed further on as the “globally human” or mythical interculturalism.

Second bad news: the symmetrically obverse “identitarian culturalism” of interlocking resentments hides a final horizon of ethnic cleansing. Its construction of monolithic subject-objects, of which persons are only subordinate cases (women or men, Serbs or Croats, Hindu or Moslem, etc. *ad nauseam*), also enforces the only proper or allowable investigative framework in each case. Professionally, it would follow that each of us could finally speak only about her or himself, for what right has an elderly well-fed Croat to speak about the young ones or those who did not have dinner yesterday? Such mini-myths negotiate how to fit into the global myth and market much like Godzilla with King Kong, over the ruins of trampled cities—not so schlocky after Beirut or Sarajevo. Gayatri C. Spivak’s remark that “a culturally relativist feminist universalism” makes the world safe for international Capital through “the constitution of ‘woman’ as object-beneficiary and ‘feminist’ as subject-participant of investigation” (v) encapsulates such pernicious micropolitics.

I shall now proceed to some epistemic considerations derived from my intercultural probings of Japan, and then to testing them in intercultural theatre studies.

2. Epistemic Considerations: Monadic Truth vs. Caressing

2.1. My *first thesis* here calls up a crucial opposition I take from Barthes’s book about Japan (which work I have otherwise doubted at some length—Suvin, *Lessons* 27-61), between the *lovable* and the *fetishized*

body. I infer this from Barthes’s cognitive mapping in his section on Bunraku. True, any binary dichotomization shares in certain cognitive limitations, but it may be a useful initial orientation, here summarized as a Kantian table:

Notions of the Body in the *exemplum* of Theatre

BOURGEOIS, FETISHIZED	NON-BOURGEOIS, “LOVABLE”
“Animated” body	Substantive body
Organic unity, simulation “life”	Sensuous abstraction/ education from parts
Physiological essence	Plastic functions
Body governs single actor, the artist serves	Unity of performance in the spectator
Unity of individuals on the stage (character & actor)	Unity of performance in the spectator
Performance media and sign-systems are continuous, fusing	Performance media and sign-systems are discrete, adding up
Horizon: Idea, Truth	Horizon: sense/s, caress/ing

The implications of this opposition between the fetishized and lovable body are huge. It entails, as I have argued further, two opposed *epistemic models* of understanding and values. The subject-formation in post-Christian Europe and North America has resulted in a secular monotheism, where the key term is a unitary *Truth*, situated inside the individualist Self, in his deep center (it was of course a male enterprise), like the nucleus of the indivisible atom. The Self is initially semanticized only in relation to God, as the soul; every individual has a divine right to be himself because she has a divine spark in herself. This is then fully developed in the richness of thisworldly relationships as the interiorized character seen simultaneously from inside and outside, as public and private, therefore stereometrically or “in the round.” “I am a thinking thing,” proclaimed Descartes, whereas “I *possess* a body with which I am very intimately conjoined” (1:190). This fixation on interiority is accompanied by schizophrenic ambiguities toward the body. The

fetishized body in bourgeois culture has a number of variants. In the Christian tradition, culminating but not ending in the Puritans, it was often demonized as impure; on the opposite pole but still the same globe, bourgeois thisworldliness culminates in the semi-Fascist or fully Fascist populism of projected identification, where the body is reified into the stars of mass empathy: starting (as Brecht taught us) precisely in theatre and other spectacles, and continuing in the mass media, spectator sports, and politics. Various ways of expressing this truth, from its outer objectifications in possessions so brilliantly dealt with in Balzacian Realism, to an Expressionism that has lost faith in reified externalities, comprise the mainstream of our formal as well as everyday culture. In all cases, individualism as an ideology was a “Western” export into all other, pre-bourgeois societies, and it still develops primarily as (gang) predation East of Berlin and South of Zürich or Austin, Texas.

The obverse model is entailed in the substantive and lovable body, whose horizon is sense (in all its meanings). The body is the cognitive site of labour as well as of perception, but for the present purposes I shall confine myself to the *caress*. It is a relationship between two foci, like the bonds of a bipolar molecule (Barthes bases much of his distinction on the early Sartre); those foci can be people or semiotic aspects, so that the problem of lifelikeness or “living truth” does not obtain. Taking some hints from both Japan and ancient Greece, we can see personal and bodily experience as differently organized in the right-hand column. The Subject is “an open field of multiple forces” (Vernant, “L’individu” 32), which seeks and finds itself in collectivities: either getting submerged in one, often through a blind subordination to authority, or—in what I see today as the only acceptable case—making choices at their intersections. The Subject’s value, his “face,” is inscribed onto her body. Just as in Hellas, to that body belong “his name, his lineage, his origins, his status within the group along with the honours connected to it, the privileges and respect that he may rightfully expect, as well as his personal excellence, all of his qualities and merits—beauty, strength, courage, nobility of behaviour, self-mastery..., demeanour, bearing...” (Vernant, “Introduction” 18). In this optic all classical Hellenic and Asian literature, from the tragedy to the *Tale of Genji*, seems to fully or predominantly feature Subjects as types rather than a “character” Self defined by ineluctable interiority (cf. Benedict 195-97 and passim); by the way, this is not at all a judgment of quality: *The Oresteia* is to my mind on the whole more significant than *A Doll’s House*, and *The Story of the Stone* (*Hung-lou meng*) than *Madame Bovary*.

Furthermore, the *incarnation* of truth, signalled and symbolized by the breath of the Holy Ghost “in-spiring” such inner truth for every

individual, means in the logocratic tradition of Christianity, mediated by a Holy Scripture and its exclusive interpreters and enforcers, that Truth is the Word of Life and the direct offspring of monotheistic authority. Francis Bacon's rejoinder against this was that Truth is the Daughter of Time (that is, of understanding through experiment), but it remained unclear where it was to be situated, and the Romantic anthropology of the wounded lone Self held fast to this Central or Nuclear Truth of Man, a supreme value which has to be unveiled as the dazzling female beauties of Thaïs or Phryné before the (male) judges of Athens. Politically, this individualism is of a piece with a State apparatus comprising "a [secularized] system of formal rights, a rationally organized bureaucracy, and a unified monetary system" (Maruyama 56). In other words, "'interiority' is itself politics and... a manifestation of absolute authority" (Karatani 95). In theatre, there is a clear continuity between the autocrat director à la Stanislavsky, sheller of nutritious peas and beauteous pearls from modest textual oysters or pods, and the responsible absolute monarch (or indeed, as Brecht rightly objected, theocrat) as incarnation of such a State.

And so we begin to glimpse a startling correlation: only monotheist cultures seem to have invented the interiorized or billiard-ball Self and its whole host of attendant ways of understanding and organizing the world (cf. Meyerson 476 and Vernant "L'individu" 36 and *passim*). Of course, the Subject in the sense of an identifiable person or group has existed for millennia before and without the nuclear Self, and it implies, neutrally, other Subjects. But the monolithic, and by definition true and good (or in art, beautiful), Self implies a monolithic Another: Platonically—The Other, transcendently—God. And in a conflictual situation, the fallen god is diabolic. It would follow, to begin with, that all talk about The Other is still essentially an individualistic allegory; it looks laudably bipolar but it tends to be composed of two monoliths.

2.2. But perhaps, after all the horrendous experiences of the 1990s, we ought to go further, namely into the clear political correlative of this metaphysical ethics. For, whether the search for the monolithic and asymptotically absolute Truth is called theology, or—from Bacon and Descartes on—Science, it is in all cases proceeding upon the One True Way of Manifest Destiny. And the deviants must be cleared out of the way, as in emperor Justinian's "One empire, one church, one law." The Nazi slogan "ein Fuehrer ein Volk" is a logical culmination of monotheist monolithism, and its extirpation of degenerate art and people (Slavs, Jews, Communists, Gypsies, homosexuals, et al.) follows consistently from the centuries of European Church and Empire rule. The "One

Inner Truth” model politically means institutionalized mass *mangling of bodies*: overt or covert, ethnic or civil *warfare*. Pluralism is a necessary corrective here but it cannot work well in the context of steady planned immiseration. Economics and ideology inextricably intertwine in this fundament of our present world setup, the warfare-without-welfare global system of which Orientalism is a *pars pro toto*.

What has all this to do with our theme? Everything, I believe. For, in a devaluation of Self, the body, pinpointing and validating the connexion of a person’s here, now, and name with the central collective categories of space, time, and agency, grows not less but much more important. How does this porous body relate to other bodies, how does it perceive the natural and social universe? We can call the perception question (even etymologically) *esthetics*. On the other hand stand collective bodies and their shaping of individual bodies (cf. Suvin, “Polity” and “Subject”); in any sense that overcomes today’s monstrous banalities, this interplay of collective and singular bodies must be called *politics*. The body that shows and manifests—indeed, ostends itself (Eco, “Semiotics”)—is after all the theatre’s central tool; hence, I conclude from this glance at the ostended non-bourgeois body, that we are here faced with Siamese twins, one of which is largely hidden. The first, visible twin is politics sundered from *aisthesis* or care for bodies, which results in tyrannical violence. But an either privatized or “globalized” refusal to acknowledge the historical dynamics traversing our bodies is the second, occulted twin, and it is the one with which we today must deal. For Barthes writing about Japan, situated as he was between the equally contemptible Gaullists and Stalinists, esthetics sundered from the affairs of the polity may have been an understandable refuge (he would later lucidly acknowledge his quandary in an imaginary conversation with Brecht, see Barthes, *Roland* 57, also 172). But without the excuse Barthes may have had, such a refusal of history became a basic orientation of most shell-shocked “Western” intellectuals, and it was replicated in performances directed by Peter Brook and the later Suzuki Tadashi that “[move] from historiography to esthetics” and “[discard] politically charged images and rhetoric in favor of a postmodern shrug of the shoulders” (Savran 53 and 52). Whence I get into a discussion of the *Mahabharata* performance.

3. Interculturalism I:

The Mythical Estrangement of Brook's "Mahabharata" exemplum

3.1. Peter Brook's *Mahabharata* performance has been robustly discussed since its 1985 Avignon first night, and it has been one of the most widely seen "intercultural" works, finally available also as a movie (1989); but it was also one about which critics split most violently. It is a prominent *exemplum* for a theoretical discussion testing its positions through historical induction.

We have many testimonies by critics as well as by the much-interviewed Brook himself of how the performance proceeded (cf. for example, Bharucha *Theatre*, Kustow, "Reports," Schechner et al., Shevtsova, Williams ed. 353-89, "World," and the indications in Birringer 167, Carlson 91-92, Pavis 215-16). On the basis of my memories of the Tokyo version and of the movie, as well as of the Carrière text and critical materials, I shall focus here *only* on matters relevant for my theoretical interests. First, my strong doubts certainly allow an appreciation of Brook's virtuosity, especially in his *fortes*: the pictorial arrangement of scenes; the clarity of actors' movement—with hints from Kathakali—that somewhat compensates for the Tower of Babel pronunciations; and the spare but suggestive narrative sweep for maximum audience effect. However, the better the worse: my overriding feeling is that all those evocations of quasi-Indian early royal interiors and artisanal products (screens, mats, braziers and candles, low wooden tables, hanging chandeliers, pottery, Indian-style dresses from restrained whites to rich scarlets and yellows) or geology and vegetation (pool and river banks, flower garlands, bamboo, sand and rock) amounted to a pseudo-epic of warrior immediacy around the small camp-fires, an evocation of a blood-and-soil male bonding—a pre-capitalist *comitatus* group—that explained away the central *gestus* of a sanctified *violence*. Violence by warrior elites towards entire clans or ethnic groups is here explained as unquestionably necessary. True, the Pandava protagonists attempt to get their rights without war, but this "Poetical History of Mankind" (as it is defined by the narrator Vyasa right at the outset, cf. Shevtsova 210-11) shows that "pitiless and uncontrollable" warfare, horribly dangerous as its "sacred weapons" might be, is inevitable. This holds, as the sage king Yudishthira says, equally for the battlefield and the human heart: war is inevitable in view of both human pride and thirst for justice.

Everything, as [Brook's] story makes plain, leads to the war. The enactment of the war releases a phenomenal array of impressions, sensations and images that appeal to all the senses at once. They

are brutal, subtle, gentle, horrifying, some sharp and succinct as only poetry can be, while others flow on, extending their reach and gaining momentum as they go. (Shevtsova 212)

To the contrary, the equally great or divine force of sexual love leads to discord, strife, and death, as emblemized right at the outset in the death threat for love to Pandu, continued in Arjuna's loss of maleness after refusing the apsara woman, and functioning as a ground-bass in most fights about the allegiance or outright possession of the women. And finally, the central philosophical or cosmological dialog between Arjuna and Krishna culminates for Brook in the illumination how to act well in the war slaughters that immediately follows.

3.2. What consequences follow if this reading is accepted? Many critics, especially in New York, objected to Brook's "appropriation" of the Indian voice. I wish to deal briefly with this general "postcolonial" or micropolitical fetish, for I see it as a red herring and deny it as a useful term. All life is continual appropriation and evacuation, grasping and letting go, not only of food and oxygen but also of images, metaphors, terms, concepts, narrative genres and plots—Richard Dawkins's memes. Long before this was theorized by T.S. Eliot and Bert Brecht, there was no culture without creative stealing: indeed the more one imitated the illustrious ancestors the better, before the newfangled Renaissance concept of originality that denoted being *without* rather than *with* a diachronic origin (see Suvin, *Lessons* 114-15). To erect appropriation as such into a problem, to wave it as an indiscriminate shibboleth or bugaboo, seems to me simply bourgeois cant.

Yet! This unfortunate term signals a real sensitive area: what is proper appropriation outside of the alienating codes of private property and copyright? If every appropriation also changes both the appropriator and the "appropriated from," just how or into what is either changed? Can we dimly adumbrate some procedural rules in culture that would block expropriation in favour of two-way traffic by analogy to multiple and complex pre-capitalist mutual donation of material and moral use-values (where, as glimpsed by Mauss, the gift vehiculates concerns of both sides as they impinge on its own *mana*)? Or by a refunctioning of the Golden Rule, Categorical Imperative, and indeed the Aesculapian Oath's *primum non nocere* (above all, do not harm)? Is, say, a Dogon statue or the Quran or the Christian Bible or the *Mahabharata* if not a private then a collective property of the belief-group that sees it as divine revelation, so that unlicensed appropriators can legitimately be chastized in proportion to that grave offence? Should we deliver Rushdie

to the bloodthirsty clerics, Joyce to the scandalized clergy or Baudelaire to the public prosecutor—for, as Mussolini said of Gramsci, this brain must be prevented from thinking? The answer is: no we should not. But why not? Surely not because hurting people does not matter, and if god and socialism are dead everything is permitted—so long as the market circulates? Socrates thought the polity had a right to judge him. Are there no offences of grave misappropriation (however we then might secondarily debate the proper way of stopping them)?

In other words: What hurt may any of us be expected to bear, even if not grin at? A baby's birth hurts, and so does a senior battered in a city park and a population poisoned by chemical fumes or smog. The position I propose to you, as my *second thesis*, is that when appropriation furthers human creativity or productivity, the psychological pain collaterally produced should be borne. "Creativity" is too monotheist a term, and "productivity" too capitalist, but by this use I am trying to suggest a collective framework for my caress model. Such productivity includes the writings of Joyce and Rushdie, the reuse of African or Polynesian masks in *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon*, and the semiotic texts of any theatre worker who offends even consecrated certainties IF (and only if) they do so with a view to better cognitive understanding of the position of that or of another group or person under the stars. Opinions may legitimately differ as to when this is the case. However, we should, *in the domain of signification and for cognitive reasons appropriate to that domain* in case of doubt err on the side of tolerance (see Milton in the *Areopagitica*). But obversely, offending for purposes of profit (for example, extortion of "art" objects for Northern museums without consent and adequate compensation, cf. Hountondji), of vanity, or of class, gender, ethnic, and other supposed superiority, is beyond the pale.

Thus, I am not bothered that Brook's actors come (he says) from 19 nations, so that a Babel of accents prevails on the stage, or that the performances were played in French for France and English for the USA: nostalgia for closed national markets of culture will get us nowhere. There is no stringent reason for Brook's performance to deal specifically with India, present or past, though it would be false advertising if he had pretended to do so (which he did not quite do). Obversely, I am very little impressed by ploys like serving "authentic Indian food" in the intermissions of Mnouchkine's *L'Indiade* (Carlson 86): would serving *Wiener Schnitzel* before a performance of Schnitzler really help in understanding this critic of fake imperial Austrian morality? Categories such as a monolithic—say, Indian or even Rajasthani, Yugoslav or even Serbian—nation or State (also a common "pre-expressive" global human nature) are false and pernicious. Epistemologically, as Anuradha Kapur

has cogently remarked writing about the *Ramlila* and cultural tradition in general, “several possible voices,” including to my mind prominently those of doubt and desecration as well as of certainty and consecration, are to be opposed to “a single essentially authentic voice” (6)—that mystification of conservatives and unfailing temptation of fascinated foreign visitors. Power in both the world-system’s centre and in the periphery states is internally contradictory. As to the imperial countries of the North-West, does not almost everyone reading this come from them, and yet many attempt to be critical of that hegemony? As to the countries of the South or East, there is no “pure indigenous model” (cf. Case 124 discussing G. Spivak): did not the Rightwing Indian government endorse, propagandize, and bounteously finance Brook’s production though it spent years touring the world without coming to India? “‘The Orient’ [can] be manufactured in India itself” (see Bharucha, “Somebody’s” 198–99 and *passim*). If Brook were “to utilize images drawn from the Indian experience to construct a theatrical celebration of human brotherhood,” as Marvin Carlson puts it, I would look at this with sympathy. But then Carlson qualifies brotherhood as “either metaphysical or political” (90), and this is where my critique would set in.

It follows then that the proper terminology is not that of “possessions taken” from an allegorical monad, a Self vs. Another: “argument in terms of cultural ‘property’ is simply inadequate” (Shevtsova 209). The useful horizon is one of bodily pragmatics, a relational dyad. Adorno once darkly defined “the socially critical zones of artworks” as “wo es weh tut,” where it hurts (353)—and I would include as a prominent test the role of actual killing or mangling of bodies, the reified Death drive.

3.3. Brook’s performance is to my mind both overtly metaphysical and covertly political, and in both cases unacceptably such. It is metaphysical (in the sense explained at 1.1 above) because it presents the French, US or Japanese audience with a picture of human relationships that Patrice Pavis, no doubt echoing Brook’s oft-stated intention, calls “a vision of rural India, at once eternal and contemporary” (187; see also Bharucha on the expunging of caste, *Theatre* 100–02). I would then stress with Pavis that the “mythical and ‘atmospheric’ readability” of the reworked source epic is straitjacketed into a “narrow register [that] too much resembled High Mass” (205 and 206). What does that metaphysical atmosphere then politically (and ethically) amount to?

Brook’s “international theatre” always wished “to articulate a universal art, that transcends narrow nationalism in its attempt to achieve human essence” (Brook “Complete”). This has led to memorable performances as well as to ghastly errors such as his *Orghast* kowtowing to the

murderous regime of the Iranian Shah.² So when Brook formulates in 1987 to Schechner his scenic ideal, it is: “At that absolute and pregnant moment, geography and history cease to exist” (Schechner et al. 55). In Carlson’s pithy summary, “All cultural differences are thus to be subsumed in ... the direct, culturally unmediated experience Brook posits for the *Mahabharata*, and whose illusory nature has been so scathingly revealed by theorists like Derrida and Blau” (88)—and let me add, even earlier and better by the Barthes of *Mythologies*. The claim to “esthetic universalizing” (Case 122), which pretends to undercut all historical shaping of people’s living together, reduces it to the lowest common denominator of high bourgeois “eternally human” post-Freudian drives of Eros and Thanatos, with Death clearly winning over everything except the esthetic absolute moment.

Brook enlists the prestige of an if not religiously then esthetically near-sacred or sublime artefact, the great *Mahabharata* poem, for subtle and pleasurable inculcation of the mythically unchanging human essence. All the epical agitations of the plot are constructed, in direct opposition to the Brechtian narration employed, to oscillate between two static poles. On the one hand, there is the monumental grandeur of non-reified, face-to-face human relationships, characteristic of European pictures of “hard primitivism” from the Renaissance pastoral to precisely Orientalism. On the other hand, there is the awful but somehow tragically comforting sublimity of equally non-reified mass combat, tamed by a mishmash of Asian and European theatre conventions of abstraction. These two poles are thus special cases of what Pavis has well identified as the Euro-American theatre’s search for rejuvenation through both “foreign sensuality [and] coded abstraction” (211). My *third thesis* is that these two poles embrace *an illusory plenitude of being*, well-known from Orientalist approaches to, say, Japanese semiotics (see Suvin, *Lessons* ch. 1), or precisely to Sanskrit, which was from the outset claimed for the particularly pernicious construction of Aryan linguistics as a religious corpus (by F. Schlegel, see Case 113ff.). I would call this approach *mythical estrangement*. It may be emblemized by the cosmic light and flame effect strewn through the play.

² Coming to the Bristol Symposium from research in Germany, where many GDR intellectuals’ collaboration with a milder though still contemptible regime is constantly raked over the coals, I think it might be appropriate to raise this point, much graver for an existentially non-constrained situation such as Brook’s.

4. *Interculturalism II: A Brighter Alternative and Bipolar Model*

4.0. The *Mahabharata* example is particularly apposite as it presents to my knowledge the clearest case of what the theologians so well call *corruptio optimi pessima*. Namely, Brook most slyly enlists for his purpose the quite proper revulsion from both the solipsistic Self and the disenchanted world. On this devastated planet and with our devastated subjects we rightly have a nostalgia for a non-capitalist mode of human relationships (cf. Suvin, *Lessons* 27ff.; in the USA this nostalgic move has traditionally been translated into the master discourse of religion, for example, as a quest for Nirvana, cf. Christy ed. 43 and passim). Our best traditions, from the Athenian polity, the Hebrew prophets, and Jehoshua of Nazareth to the Renaissance, Enlightenment, and the socialist/communist movements, seem to have led straight into the present intolerable dead-end.

4.1. This alienation has resulted in a true return of the repressed. Let me say it with Sloterdijk: "It is an open secret among the experts that for more than a century a great part of Western intelligentsia, as the saying goes, 'asianizes.'... [The] discoverer exposes himself to a counter-discovery by the discovered." The "world talk about world literature" (82-83), started by translators from Persian, Sanskrit or Chinese and codified by Goethe, was an ecumenical consequence of the colonializing inclusion of the mysterious East into the very unmysterious global division of labour. But while this led to its desperate endeavours, from Russia to Japan, to catch up with the West's heavy artillery of naval guns and cheap consumer goods (Marx-Engels), we uneasy intellectuals of the West discovered the Wisdom of the East, just being pounded into the dust by those guns. Primarily, what we bourgeois or anti-bourgeois Euro-Americans thought we were finding in the Soul's far-off passages can tell us what we *needed* to find; and *why*: "Dreamily entering upon a sunken East and conjuring up an Asian Antiquity as normative cultural model for present-day life, the West searches in an alien past for the possibilities of its own future" (Sloterdijk 86). Such utopian spacetimes are estranging mirrors *for us* (Bloch). This implies, as Sloterdijk further argues, that the West is by now (or at least we intellectuals are) in a post-monotheistic age "which cannot find in the holy writings of the Judeo-Christian tradition the concepts that our times need for a competent self-understanding," that the "double commitment to self-determination and high technology seems to have left us with a global mess," and that therefore the "Eastern turn... puts into play no less than a world-cultural alternative, which remains such even when the real contemporary East

has been modernized to non-recognizability by its adoption of Western techniques of mobility (*Mobilisierung*)” (87-89).

True, mythologists of the “Eastern turn” à la Brook wilfully forget—and buy into—that most pre-capitalist modes of production entailed total murderous despotism over the great majority of “lower” classes, genders, castes, and so forth, while *all* the modes, including tribal societies, entailed grave physical disadvantages (toil, short life-span, etc.): I should not like to have lived before the Enlightenment. Nonetheless, today we may well focus on the crucial plenitude of being that we lack, what Schechner in 1970 articulated as the yearnings for wholeness, process, concreteness, and “truth through participation” (39-40). For, in those societies the labour of the individual was not abstracted into a capitalized “universal equivalent,” so that in Marx’s famous “Asiatic mode”:

[t]he communal system on which this mode of production is based prevents the labour of the individual from becoming private labour and his product the private product of a separated individual; it causes individual labour to appear rather as a direct function of a member of the social organization (33-34).

I think it is from traces and exfoliations of this “direct functioning” within a transparent—if unacceptably hierarchical—society that there springs forth the sensual and epistemic fascination registered by Sloterdijk and also Brook. For example, the pragmatic phenomenism of East Asian cosmology and politics is a stance which can in the West only be found within art (and Brook significantly shunned it in favour of Indian or better Orientalist transcendentality). Alas, in individualist fiction, from the mendacious Loti and his *Madame Butterfly* on, the sensuality and fascination is usually translated into the sentimental code, the only bourgeois discourse available for it. But Modernist painters seem to have had more success with cognitive appropriations, where the strange redefined our European eyes, and so have some theatre people from Meyerhold through Yeats and Brecht to the present.

4.2. My *fourth* (and final) *thesis* here is that the alternative, the fertile, way to practice interculturalism is *to doubt a presumed “Western” universal*—which is in fact an artefact of bourgeois or capitalist hegemony (therefore often eagerly imitated by subservient or go-getting Easterners)—with the help of a non-NATO instance that puts this presumed universal into crisis or falsifies it. This difficult path to understanding was blazed in Europe by Montaigne’s splendid essay “On the Cannibals” (1580). The reason for deepening and broadening it is not

(technocratically) better communication or (pedagogically) illuminating other culture's trees by means of an outside, forest-beholding glance. The reason, primarily, is to understand, through the estranging (*verfremdend*) dream and carny mirror of strangers, how *we* might and should better live. We could also call it cross-pollination or grafting, which produces something that differs from both sources, a new ethnically impure but perhaps vigorous bastard. Many approaches from Meyerhold and Brecht through Barba and Mnouchkine might provide good examples, but to vary this canon I shall use my particular interest in *mugen nô* for falsifying the theory of ubiquitous dramatic conflict.³

I have argued at some length, in *Theatre Journal* 1994 and more fully in my book *Lessons*, that besides the ubiquitous model of conflict, there exists the splendid and incontrovertible example of Zeami's (and some other continuators') category of "Phantasmal Nô," that can reveal to us the equally valid model of *revelation*. Plays on this model are organized around the "effect of initiation into a true awareness of something," which is for European-type culture usually confined to lyrical poems (Goodman 3-4), although, of course, present in some detective stories, SF, and in supreme plays such as *Oedipus Tyrannos* and *King Lear*. No doubt, contrast, that is, non-antagonistic opposition, remains inevitable for any imaginable stage narration. But it does not *always* have to be reduced to the monotheist fixation on adversariness, to conflict defined as "the endeavour to carry out one's will against an opposing other will" (Weber 138, on the tracks of Nietzsche). The model here is one of formal battles between armies, whose horizon is victory or defeat, while in revelation the contrasts are solved by metonymic supersession of the initial situation by its better understanding at the end, and personal will is usually not solution but problem. I concluded that a stage story must have one or more agents confronted with social and cosmic time and value-horizons; it then *may*, but does not necessarily *have to*, have a collision with other personalized agencies: contrasts within and with the world will suffice. For audiences with non-competitive presuppositions such a stage story might well be, for example, progression from the dwindling of life's passions to the desolation resulting from stoical enlightenment—as in Beckett; or an unfolding of the destined succession of historical eons as well as its price in suffering—as in *Prometheus*

³ I wanted also to discuss John Arden's and Margaretta D'Arcy's to my mind classic refunctioning of the Chhau masked dance-theater in *The Island of the Mighty* for a new look at our rationalism and patriarchy-matriarchy opposition (cf. Malick 131-32, 139-83, and 194-95), but spacetime caught up with me so that I can only say that in my hypothesis theirs is an exemplary non-exploitative and cognitive use of the same source abused by Brook (cf. the report in Zarilli and Schechner's comment 134-36).

Bound; or Zeami's Phantasmal Nô where the audience is led to passionately understand both the bright and the dark revelation—the desolation of life's dark clinging passions in most Warrior and Women's Nô, or the celebration of the community's evergreen renewal in Deity Nô. As all three examples convincingly argue, this type of revelation is no goody-goody accommodation to the *status quo*, but in their best cases a semiotic articulation of the intertwining of celebration and desolation, a passionate meditation where our distinctions of religion, politics, and ethics do not quite apply. Though functionally “nested” within claims to significance—often sacredness—permitting access, in the outermost circle of theatre event, to very conflictual positions of brute power, Zeami is often radically dubious of ruling pieties: I read him as the bad conscience of the shogunal warrior class in his time. Usually, such art springs up at the crossroads of Raymond Williams's nostalgic and oppositional structures of feeling as different from the hegemonic one. Finally, and crucially for my argument, the revelation model recognizes the existence of strife (*polemos*) but deals with it by what I believe is not at all catharsis but understanding *sympathy*. Let me mention here only the difference between the Nô's much more palpable “ghost” warriors, reactualizing the battles of their past existence in order to reveal their suffering, and the Senecan vengeful ghost tradition of, say, the final carnage in *Hamlet*.

I have always doubted the humanist and individualist reduction of Hellas to the great ancestor of modern European (even modern Greek) national cultures, because Athenian theatre, for example, seems to me nearer to what we can reconstruct of Asian theatre before the European gunships than to Goethe or Wagner; and Schechner's “nesting” model of concentric circles, where “the agon of contest among poets and actors” was finally surrounded by the solidarity of the *polis* of Athens (160), suggests a useful topology: with due modification, it could be applied to the values and poetics of that theatre—and of my previous examples. Beckett can then be read as atheist Mystery-plays, presenting the painfully total absence of community, the revelation that there is only zero to reveal; while all socialist and anarchist theatre is either embattled, political deconstruction (Dada, Piscator), or an attempt to articulate a new communal solidarity (Socialist Realism), with the best people ambiguously stretched between these poles (Meyerhold, Brecht).

Thus, meditating on the lessons of Zeami et al. might be of crucial help to understand our own civilization's aberrancies—especially, the limits of the conflict paradigm, unable to encompass fully Aeschylus or Brecht or Beckett or (once we are alerted to this alternative, to what Barthes and Jameson call the hermeneutic mystery) so many other

performance examples. Conflict is then itself revealed as a historically extremely important civilizational *choice* rather than inevitability, fit for a society which is “the battleground of the individual interests of each against all” (Hegel 146), whose characteristic games are zero-sum ones, with strictly symmetrical winners and losers as in football or a poker confrontation. Conflict is intrinsic to and has been intensified by the deep structure of monotheistic (God vs. Devil, scapegoating) Euro-American social practices, including our cultural apparati and speech genres; in Batesonian terms, it has “trapped [us in the West] in the notion that schismogenic situations, which are in fact profoundly neurotic, are exciting, and that anything else must be dull.... Schismogenesis ... is as much an acquired habit as is the nonschismogenic behavior characteristic of Bali” (Berman 214). In all our handbooks and theories of drama and of theatre performance (at least up to the mid-1980s), conflict is an undisputed and critically unexamined founding presupposition. And yet, as the great historian Braudel has noted, “surprise and distance—those important aids to comprehension—are both equally necessary for an understanding of that which surrounds you—surrounds you so evidently that you can no longer see it clearly” (737). I would trust, then, that the strange and different relationships to be found in the “Orient” can have exactly the opposite effect from that described by Said: not the reaffirmation but the *defamiliarization*, a Brechtian decentering (Althusser) of our familiar norms and mythical identities: as a hypothesis, a proposal for dialogue—and perhaps even caress.

4.3. The horizon of Brook’s *Mahabharata* (on stage and in film) is fully conflictual. It remains so important because it co-opted many crucial non-individualist lessons of body syntax from the periphery of the world-system (Africa and Asia) for an updating of Liberalism to fit the passage from individualism to corporativism. Brook is definitely not radically dubious of the new ruling pieties, but only (as most Artaudians) of free-market humanism. Indeed I read his perennial “moral neutrality” (Tynan) as enabling him for a master of ceremonies to the new despotic hegemony slouching toward the World Bank, as rehearsed in Persepolis. The *Mahabharata* model might seem to be, metaphysically speaking, a recognition of exasperated strife contained by audience “reconcil[iation] with themselves” (Brook “Interview”). But *pragmatically*, I submit, its upshot is not understanding, whether deconstructive or sympathetic, for audiences West or East: its culmination in mass carnage leads to no cognitive applicability but to a beauteous shrug of the shoulders: *c’est la vie*. I shall test this, in a provisional conclusion, by focussing on *the body* in Brook’s performance system.

This seems to me very fair since this approach deals with one of the most important foci of his energies and interests, from the 1960s' days of the Artaudian *Marat/Sade* and *US* on. "Artaud is a presiding deity (or demon) of *The Mahabharata*," argues Kustow, because Brook has tellingly applied the theatrical metaphysics Artaud derived from the 1933 encounter with the Balinese dance performance (257). I have counted Brook's control of the actors' bodies among his major achievements here. But these bodies are presented either in ceremony or in war: not in labour and not, I would maintain, in loving caress—erotics are either a ritual or a fight on this stage. The overwhelming upshot is a mass mangling of bodies accepted as fated. The cost of all of this is only vaguely adumbrated, best in relation to the female roles who are unavoidable, key catalyzers; furthermore, it is neutralized by esthetic perfection: if only we could, the audience is supposed to feel, live in such clear-cut ways, with manly handclaps and womanly loyalty, without traffic jams and job worries, asphalt cities and political economy! Maybe even a world holocaust would not be too high a price to pay ... I am sorry to say this, but to the extent my analysis is correct, in Brook's *Mahabharata* esthetics pretends to substitute for politics while insinuating a Right-wing mythology—so that the 1930s' analyses of Nazism offered by Brecht and Benjamin, updating Marx's seminal discussion of politics as farcical masquerade in *The 18th Brumaire*, should be further updated with insights from the coeval analysis of Stalinism and of admass offered by the Frankfurt School to meet Brook's dangerously kindred variant.

In the terms of my first thesis (section 2), Brook is faking a presence of non-reified lovable bodies for the purposes of another absolute truth, only this time a mythically transcultural, atemporal, and non-spatial Truth. But the symmetry between this approach and the multinational corporations shifting US managers in spacetime to Bhopal or Japanese ones to Kentucky in pursuit of the absolute truth of profit may make us pause: global truth without possibilities of historical opposition and radical change means deformed bodies masked by estheticized celebration of the *status quo*. This transcends the corrupted nationalism of closed markets, but only in favour of a global, jet-set market. But it simultaneously recirculates the worst chauvinist, Rightwing radical "Hindutva" constructions of a past racial grandeur for which mass liquidation (for example, applied to Moslems, as Bharucha suggests—"Somebody's" 211) is inevitable if philosophically saddening: global Liberalism is imbricated with and co-responsible for ethnocentric *ressentiments* (cf. Bharucha, "Somebody's" 206). Brook's rurally philosophical samurai or Conans, those Asianized pseudo-Shakespearean outlines (cf. Bharucha, *Theatre* 108, and Shevtsova 217-18), fit well with

fantasies of Heideggerian blood and soil again fashionable in Europe after the 1970s, whose logical end-horizon is the siege of Sarajevo: we might even say such esthetics provides the new global hegemony with material for a good conscience. If this were all there is to intercultural theatre, then it would be, I hold, unacceptable. But this is also dubiously intercultural, perhaps merely (as Roger Long phrased it) “a curried version of Western theatre” (“Reports”).

4.4. What, then, are the cognitive as well as political yields and dangers of intercultural “Asianizing” by Euro-American intellectuals in the *exemplum* of theatre? I have two parting considerations, faces of the same coin: an epistemological and a pragmatic one.

Epistemologically, I propose to you a spread between two poles. On one pole, I would induce from the use of Zeami’s Phantasmal Nô that we—our ruling image and value-systems—can become strange to ourselves. This would be a shift of paradigm, with the full force of Thomas Kuhn’s sense of paradigm shifts as revolutionary, in my opinion today the beginning of wisdom. On the other pole, a performance like Brook’s makes a Westernized Other confirm and update the West’s globalizing Self and value-system. I concur with Pavis that “This is a phenomenon of normalization... (rather than interculturalism)” (211). My opposition, one between *mythical and critical estrangement*, might be exaggerated for the purposes of a heuristic model, but with the inevitable simplifications of any model I propose it for your testing.

Pragmatically, the danger in colonial Orientalism was to see an exotic, as a rule inferior, Other. However, as the Brook *Mahabharata* shows, the premise of its imperial twin, universalist Liberalism—and especially the mythic, anti-Enlightenment pseudo-Liberalism from, say, the mid-70s on—that there is no history and thus no difference between cultures, is as pernicious. This devolution of Liberalism puts forward the presence of a heroically rural East as deliverance from history in a powerful Rightwing nostalgia; these twins are, as I began to argue in Section 2, complementary and mutually reinforcing problems. Both these variants arrogate to themselves “the universal point of reference in relation to which others recognize themselves as particularities” (Sakai 477). A simple substitution of idols, falling into the trap of The Fascinating Other, is no solution. As Sakai concluded in relation to Japan, any useful critique of the West in relation to other cultures must necessarily be complemented with a critique of those non-Western cultures. Today all societies are converging in mega-corporate financial, industrial or agro-business conglomerates, and this convergence correlates to some variant of triumphant capitalist class exploiting a steadily impoverished mass

of population—with the somewhat independent middle classes being squeezed out of existence. In this state of affairs, we have to ask: *cui bono*? In whose interest and with what effects are intercultural ventures done?

Rustom Bharucha has suggested that “megastructures of intercultural practice like the *Mahabharata*” are embedded in international politics,” supported and rendered possible as they are by governmental (here French and Indian) and private mega-bodies (here Ford, Rockefeller, Philip Morris, AT&T, Saint-Laurent, Coca Cola, etc.—“Somebody’s” 199 and *Theatre* 118). Their material and financial mega-organization is staggering. For Brook’s three-month run at the Broadway Academy of Music in New York City, a theater had to be remodelled at the cost of ca. \$5 million and apartments rented for a group of 57 (including 11 children); for the performance in Perth, 3,000 articles were imported—of which about half was textile and leather costuming and pieces of fabrics—for an estimated value of ca. French Francs 490,000 (ca. 80,000 Euros at today’s value). The box-office receipts in New York were \$1.5 million; air-flight patterns in Western Australia had to be changed during 12 days (all data from “World”). We should compare this with Marvin Carlson’s most suggestive category of the “modern ‘pilgrimage’ theatre” with quasi-ritual overtones (85ff), beginning with Wagner’s Bayreuth that if not globalized then continentalized the splintered Central-European cultures into one Teutonic mega-myth, still ambiguously anti-capitalist (the Nazis accepted this with thanks). While I doubt the postwar leisure massification of theatre and other festivals can be explained in any simple way, there is little doubt that their post-1968, Po-Mo turn is to the Right, like Wagner after 1848. But Brook has gone the modern culture-vulture pilgrimage sites one better by personally (as an institutionalized person or personalized institution) becoming an ambulant site. In this respect too, Brook’s institutional performance is exemplary (though a number of other names could be mentioned, for example, Suzuki Tadashi).

A crucial matter I could not enter upon here would be just who is the audience for this intercontinental pilgrimage theatre, who is it for? Here too a latter-day Wagner, totalizing the heterogenous elements, Brook has always wished to meld his spectators into a unified whole (cf. Shevtsova 216), a symmetrical obverse of Piscator’s splitting the audience along class-interest fault-lines. Is this potential melded audience Masao Miyoshi’s new “transnational class of professionals who can live and travel globally,” accumulating material and symbolic capital “at the site where managers and technicians carry out research and development, not where the corporations or manufactured goods originate” (742 and 745)?

[B]rand names command recognition and attraction.... Cultural eccentricities are to be avoided, if not banned altogether. National history and culture are not to intrude or not to be asserted oppositionally or even dialectically. They are merely variants of one “universal”—as in a giant theme park or shopping mall. Culture will be kept to museums, and the museums, exhibitions, and theatrical performances will be swiftly appropriated by tourism and other forms of commercialism ... [which] are huge transnational industries by themselves. (Miyoshi 747)

Might a new internationalism of the Right, what he calls “the global truth,” perhaps be brilliantly adumbrated in Brook’s brilliant performance?

And then, if this is the case, who are our classes and our writing finally for?

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All unacknowledged translations in the text are mine.

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**Centennial Politics:
On Jameson on Brecht on Method (1998)**

O great academics! Still, let's search more
diligently and not despair.

Augustine of Hippo

The highest thing would be to understand
that all phenomena are already theory.

Goethe

Brecht can be supremely useful to us—people engaged in thinking through and doing something about the present catastrophic state of the world; and what is useful is his *method*. This is Fredric Jameson's thesis in his path-breaking book *Brecht and Method*. It is, I think, the most lasting contribution to come out of the hullabaloo that was the 1998 Brecht centennial. But what does Jameson mean by method?¹

One of Jameson's formulations may provide a first springboard: "there existed a Brechtian 'stance' [*Haltung*] which was not only doctrine, narrative, or style, but all three simultaneously; and ought better to be called, with all due precautions, 'method'" (132). This builds on but considerably expands Lukács's famous assertion in *History and Class Consciousness* that "orthodox Marxism ... refers exclusively to method"—precisely because it adds the crucial factors of *stance* (involving the whole body) and *narrative* (involving a more than exclusively conceptual articulation of a possible world). But then I would like to ask *why* is it necessary to stress that this is not doctrine. Clearly, doctrine has failed us in the 20th century: that is, doctrine as a set of tightly—as it were "horizontally"—linked political-cum-philosophical concepts, not falsifiable by strategically placed "vertical" references to embodied situations from which they once sprang and to which they should in any Brechtian (and Jamesonian) "meshing thinking" (*eingreifendes denken*) be applied. We are now yoked to the victorious doctrine of "free trade," but this is both a lie in its premises and a horror in its results. The opposing doctrine of Leninism was in some important

¹ Fredric Jameson, *Brecht and Method*, Verso, London & New York 1998, ISBN 1-85984-809-5. Jameson's writing exemplifies what it wishes to convey in how he conveys it, so that I shall quote him fairly extensively. "Full disclosure": in the book, D. Suvin is briefly accorded generous praise in two or three places. Of course, my judgments follow my view of Jameson's judgments and not his views on this or that critic—unless these become politically strategic, in which cases I tend to agree with him.

aspects flawed when extrapolated west of Russia 1900-1921, it was certainly misused within Russia itself, and it is at any rate inadequate to the physical and mental technologies of Post-Fordism. What, then, is to be inherited, what is transmissible from the socialist past, which includes many glories, and even whose bad errors carry indispensable lessons for the future? What may be “a place-keeper” for what Jameson in a somewhat different context calls the metaphysics, but we may call the doctrines, “that have become impossible” (12)?

Jameson’s answer in Brecht’s case—yet Brecht is taken by him as exemplary for the whole inheritance—is: method. But as usual, it is arrived at through a rich (and richly persuasive) intricacy that requires the discussion of at least a few of the key foci “to be read into, or read out of” a complex argument (as Brecht said about *Coriolanus* and Shakespeare in general). Its key links have to do with what Brecht may mean or convey to us and with why this is significant beyond literary or theatre philology. These two facets come together in: what was and is the social and indeed class locus from which and to which Brecht speaks? In whose name or names, and then to whom, could he—or did he—speak? After considering a few such foci, I would return to see what illumination we may derive from Brecht’s and Jameson’s “method.”²

1. Poetry, Narrative, Embodying, Allegory

It is clear enough that not only is Brecht a poet, but that had Brecht not been a (major!) poet or wordsmith, he would not have been anything else of significance for us. Jameson distances himself from “Western critics from Adorno on” who have insinuated Brecht was “(just) a poet” (6), but his brief is not to go into detailed appreciations of any single work, genre or mode. His approach is perhaps what Benjamin would have called a commentary (that starts from the prejudgment that the commented text is a classical one): a close reading indeed but one that shifts from the closed single “work” of I.A. Richards and Company to details and passages characterizing a whole opus—poem or prose or play. A network of references athwart the hidden monadic theological assumptions of “organic” literary scholarship and based on the contradictory unity of Brecht’s stance is thus put in place. We still get splendid analyses by the way; for verse, perhaps the best example is Jameson’s pithy comment on “The Cranes” (142-43), the

² Other important foci, for example sympathy vs empathy and other emotions, Brecht and Subject, Brecht and modernism, Brecht’s and Jameson’s “representability of capitalism,” must be slighted here; see on the first topic chapter 16 of this book.

classical poem in two voices fitted into *Mahagonny*, whose bittersweet lyricism is by itself enough to dispel the cliché—anyway repudiated by the mature poet—that Brecht is emotionless. Equally revealing are throwaway asides, like “the two fundamental Brechtian works *Saint Joan* and the *Three-penny Novel*” (151), at which my response is “right on!” Jameson’s stream of associations proceeds through concepts, but their kinetoscopic lope becomes strangely similar to a Joycean poetic narrative. Pages 81-85, for example, proceed from Opposition through Contradiction to the *V-Effekt*, move from Brecht through Hegel, Marx, Post-Modernism, Barthes, ethnomethodology, Sartre, Judith Butler (the weakest link), and Gramsci back to the “Street Scene,” to end Part 1 of the book with a culminating bang: “[all this] is the proof that reality is theoretical, but also that Brecht’s theory ... is what is ‘really’ or ‘in reality’ Brechtian in Brecht”!

Yet as earlier critics have indicated, poetry supplied a further crucial form for Brecht’s stance, the *ballad*: as in his admired “Sir Patrick Spens” and, no doubt, as in the great German heritage both of the Romantics’ *Kunstballade* and of the penny-dreadful *Moritäts* sung by itinerant balladeers which one finds imitated in “Mack the Knife” and so many other songs in the plays.³ The ballad develops through episodes, it has an inbuilt plebeian estrangement technique easily switching from impersonation to third-person narration and generalizing comment, it is both lyrical and epical: one could do worse than choose it as another major template for Brecht’s literary stance. It goes alongside the parable, the *casus*—roughly, Jolles’s elementary verbal form where a judgment of conduct also questions the norm—and the proverb, on which Jameson focuses with much illumination (99-105, 118-22, 131-40).

Brecht’s poems tell stories as often as draw up catalogs or survey inner and outer landscapes: from the great *Hauspostille* (*Devotions for the Home*) ones—“Marie Farrar,” “Evelyn Roe,” “Ballad of the Pirates,” “Remembering Marie A.”—to such final poems in the *Buckow Elegies* as “The Solution,” “When in my White Room at the Charité.” Especially after his emigration, the most effective poems combine these approaches with historicizing and making memorable (in all the senses) exemplary personal moments, say his “priapic” or sex poems, such as the extraordinary sonnets he exchanged with Grete Steffin. Very many are verse narratives either of a “case” or of a major historical complex, as the much undervalued verse updating of *The Communist Manifesto* for an age of World Wars.⁴ And “epic theatre” (a term repudiated by

³ Brecht’s musicality, beginning with his youthful guitar-picking, is thoroughly followed in the admirable Dümmling.

⁴ See now my translation and comment, “Bertolt Brecht: *The Manifesto*” and

Brecht) mainly meant that a play should, in its dramaturgic skeleton as well as in performance, tell a clear and rich story, specifying complex circumstances and their effect on human flesh and behaviour as clearly as, if more sparingly than, a realistic French novel might: in which sense Jameson's parallel with Balzac (13, 154-55) is well taken. Brecht infuriated his "Socialist Realist" critics by disregarding Marx's future-oriented dialectics where poverty is not only poverty but also revolt, for as a sincere realist committed to observation, yet whose "realism is achieved by means of Cubism" (46), Brecht could not observe a believable referent for successful revolt west of Moscow.

The crux here is whether "storytelling—or, better still, embodied storytelling, the acting out—thereby becomes the realm of some deeper truth..." (27); whether Brechtian (and indeed *any*) storytelling is potentially a privileged method, "rigorously non-formalistic, and thereby evad[ing] the philosophical objections to sheer method..." (28). In the example of historicizing, say, is "retelling individual events as though they were historical ones ... a new mode of self-knowledge?" (57). By the end of the book, this overriding question, in the early pages carefully hedged in by interrogatives, is to my mind triumphantly answered: yes, storytelling is what I would call a cognitive method—which no doubt means that our usual philosophical and scientific prejudices about what may be cognition and method will require a thorough refurbishing. Centrally, as Jameson hints when discussing narratology, there is an "ultimate irreducibility of narrative as such": in both narrative and its analysis, "it is impossible to complete the act of abstraction," to reduce understanding to "pure" conceptuality (101). Conceptual categories are, no doubt, indispensable, but figuration, topology, shapes must intertwine with them for real cognition of today's complex human situations.

But how is this general narrative "method" to be reconciled with the political interests of Brecht's class and generation? Jameson makes a convincing case that a privileged way to such reconciliation, a royal road in fact employed by Brecht, is *allegory*. One should be careful to point out that this is a new type of "open" allegory. Indeed, it is paradoxical to talk of allegory in an age skeptical of if not flatly inimical to doctrines, since allegory has traditionally been a way of squaring fiction with, and often subordinating it to, a doctrine or mythical orthodoxy. This can be seen in Aristophanes, in Buddhism, and in medieval Christianity—which was in Germany never cleanly broken by an "anti-Gothic" Renaissance as in Italy, France or England, but rather transmogrified into that

Catholic, Protestant, as well as folk Baroque which is at the root of Brecht's cultural tradition. Theoretically speaking, there can be no significant classical (doctrinal) allegory in our age. But practice is slyer than theory, and an allegory despairing because of the absence of the proper, supremely significant Law (Kafka) or—theatrically speaking—a Mystery-play set in a Limbo that knows no Heavens (Beckett) is a most significant part of avant-garde horizons in our century. Brecht had considerable esteem for both Kafka and Beckett, but he wanted to offer more hopeful counter-projects to them. Faced with the realist (including "Socialist Realist") thesis which short-circuited the tension between phenomena and doctrine, and the antithesis which allowed doctrine only as a kind of "negative way" revealing hell by its absence (the theoreticians of these two enemy brothers being Lukács and Adorno), Brecht chose a paradoxical third way for his balladic parables: to show doctrine—or, significantly, some experimentally verifiable elements thereof—as sensually present in the everyday actions of those committed to its horizon of liberation, rather than as a Platonic essence beckoning from the classless future. Brecht saw hell on earth just as clearly as those who despaired (he noted it in Breughel's vision of *Mad Meg*, used for *Courage*), but identified it, as of *Mahagonny*, with the "snare city" of consumer capitalism and war of all against all, out of which those who watch *Mother Courage* or *Shen Te* should find a way: Jameson calls it Brecht's Tao, and it is also *meth'hodos*, pursuing the Way out of exploitation and war.

Such allegorizing shuttles back and forth between abstraction and concreteness, so that there is in it "both a little more and a little less than a concept ... it keeps the procedure open" (100). This disposes of the usual complaint against concepts, from Nietzsche's onslaughts on Socrates onwards, that applying to all subsumed cases they don't apply fully (sensually, experientially) to any case. Jameson's dictum comes in a discussion of the somewhat murky Brechtian category of *Gestus*: since nobody knows how to translate it out of German (a sign just as bad as the untranslatability of the many coy French puns in Derrida), I would myself see *Gestus* as a feature of stance (*Haltung*), as its collective (theatrical) application. An excellent example of Brecht's use of allegory, sensually concrete and yet clearly doctrinal, is Menenius's patrician parable of the Belly and Members, gleefully refunctioned by the plebeian glance in Brecht's rewrite of *Coriolanus*, and performatively revealed by the various stances developed toward it by the onstage agents in that scene.

Brecht's central narrative tool and allegorical genre, the "open parable," must therefore recomplicate the classical—say Synoptic Vangel—subservience of story to intended meaning in allegory, and

create a genuine feedback, where the story is a cognitive toolkit in its own right, testing the doctrine. From among the inexhaustible ramifications of parable, I shall here only remark that the feedback Brecht constantly struggled for can also be seen as one between personal (but class-bound) interest and even the best imaginable doctrine. If we, further, remember his deep engagement with popular culture, his allegories could today also be taken as alternatives diametrically opposed to the hegemonic machines steeping us in fuzzy, rival but always subaltern, allegories pretending to be none, from Mickey Mouse and the Lion King through allegories of the Nation (to which Jameson earlier devoted a seminal book) to Superman and the Invisible Hand of the Free Market.

2. *History is Real: Allegories of Class Collectives, Self-government, "Autonomization"*

Brecht's life was shaped by the huge political earthquakes of World War 1, the Leninist "storm and stress," Fascism, Stalinism, World War 2, the Cold War. Only semi-ironically, a well-known poem of his was directed to "Poor BB," and it ends with "the earthquakes to come" amid which he hopes to keep his pleasures glowing—in the emblematic image of cigar, uniting oral metonymy and genital metaphor. Next to Russia (and the *cordon sanitaire* of east-central Europe, from Finland to the Balkans), Germany, that "middle kingdom" of Europe, felt the stress of the moving tectonic plates most strongly: Brecht saw the World War and revolutionary upheavals as closely as one could without being engulfed by them. He landed in a Berlin hospital for undernourishment in his mid-twenties, he watched the social-democratic directed police shooting at workers on May First, and an anecdote has him even listening to Hitler in Munich beer-halls before the first attempted *putsch* in 1923. For sure, he concentrated grimly on "the housepainter" between 1931 and 1945: almost—or quite—directly in the magnificent failure of *Roundheads and Peakheads* (Jameson notes its magnificence), and then in *Ui, Schweyk, Terror and Misery of the Third Reich*, and innumerable other poems and writings—not least one of the great pamphlet-essays of our age of obfuscations, *Five Difficulties in Writing the Truth*; but also in *Mother Courage*, that clear allegory of fake profit in warfare, and very possibly even in his exasperated response to the "blond beast" empathizing, the splendid and still fertile *Lehrstücke*.⁵

⁵ Jameson is one of the few English-language critics to have recognized the path-breaking theses of Reiner Steinweg on Brecht's *Lehrstücke*. He gives also some hints for the proper approach to the great oratorio of *Die Massnahme* (*The Measures Taken* is, in spite of the wrong plural—there is only one measure that counts, the wiping out of the Young Comrade—the best shot at this untranslatable title) which

The tectonic shifts underlying all such earthquakes, we ought to have learned, arise from magmatic depths we do not understand well. We can only say that something like Fordism and the Welfare-Warfare State was transforming with equal intimacy our categories of economy, technology, and belief (ideology, or brainwashing if you wish). On the Left, Brecht was together with Gramsci (to whose stances toward culture-cum-politics he has astounding similarities)⁶ the first lonely thinker to realize this meant an epoch-making break in history. And the kinship to Gramsci is also striking in a matter of overriding importance for both: the steadfast, life-long, and central orientation in all of Brecht's life-worlds towards not only collectives, but also *self-governing collectives*. This was the steady boat and compass amidst the hurricanes he met "who had hats on."

Here too, much more than doctrine is involved: Brecht just could not work at any major project without a group of friends for dialogue partners; even though he was then as a rule the first among equals (the only true equals he acknowledged were people whose special skills he did not share: Neher the painter, Eisler the musician, Weigel the actress). This began with his Augsburg high-school group, probably culminated in size and complexity in the Berlin days, and continued even in emigration where a couple of women collaborators fled from country to country together with Brecht, Weigel, and their children; and in East Berlin (GDR) he had his old friends, half a dozen highly capable theatre assistants, as well as official pupils from the Academy of Arts. Brecht's works contain many lines, phrases or stage arrangements he had accepted from suggestions or drafts by collaborators, but anything he incorporated was given the unmistakable imprint of his stance and rhetoric, which had by then permeated the group of collaborators anyway.⁷

is, together with *The Horatians and the Curiatians*, one of the two culminations of these "learning plays." In it Eisler played the role of Bach to a certain Leninism and Brecht figured the "militant Church" severity of it. Nobody has yet managed to find a proper use for *Die Massnahme*: neither the Left critics, who attempted to wash their hands of it, not seeing that clean hands often get cut off, nor the "centrist formalist" ones, who saw the affinity to Jesuit militancy but not the thisworldly tensions around mortality, born of a different doctrine.

⁶ See W.F. Haug, *Philosophieren mit Brecht und Gramsci*, Hamburg 1996, which one hopes to see translated into English.

⁷ Much ink has lately been spilled by writings such as the philologically shoddy and militantly capitalist work of John Fuegi (Jameson dismisses him rightly but blithely, for Fuegi is clever and very efficient in driving a wedge between women and the rest of the Left). Such texts try in vain to prove that the collaboration in texts Brecht wrote or staged came mainly from women (this is quantitatively inexact), and at that from women of whom he had carnal knowledge (and it is exact that Hauptmann, Steffin, and Berlau were among his most assiduous collaborators). However, when

The collective way of working—the “workshop” with partners and disciples—is comparable to any painter’s studio before romanticism or movie studio today; and if the publishers’ profit urge and the German editors’ doctrinaire individualism could ever be overcome, many Brecht works should be attributed to “Brecht and His Workshop”—as Giotto’s or Rembrandt’s works are without causing fuss. As usual, Brecht’s originality was to have returned, with suitably large changes, to precapitalist ways of behaving. This was above all a method which acknowledged that ours is a century torn between the manipulable “masses” of capitalist demagoguery and its kindred entertainment industries (see Brecht’s essay “The Theatricality of Fascism”)—and the only efficient alternative, self-governing collectives as creative working groups. One can see how such a collective should work in the exemplary behaviour of the Boy in Brecht’s two playlets, *He Who Says Yes* and *He Who Says No*: in a situation of dire and demonstrated necessity, he consents to sacrifice his life in order to prevent the destruction of the whole community. But dire necessity—say war or civil war—is, or ought to be, the exception and not the rule in human affairs (Stalin thought otherwise). As a rule, the group is here to protect its member—and especially a child, its future. After reasonable consultation where arguments are evaluated according to how they fit the concrete situation, and total necessity is not proven, the Boy withholds consent in the second playlet. The whole group follows his better argument. This double parable indicates Brecht’s halfway house between the special, limit-case of Lenin’s Party, whose Great Law (doctrine) must be followed for dire survival, and Luxemburg’s Councils (*Räte*, *soviets*), which would be the norm for collective decisions of self-governing socialism. In the “cold Chicago” of the lockouts and Depression, Brecht embraced the Leninist translation of Dantean hell into opposed frontlines of class struggle, as the political embodiment of his permanent epistemological “actant” Contradiction (see Jameson 81 ff.). But conversely, Galileo can only constitute a Science to Make the Life of People Easier (a friendly, in fact socialist science), when flanked by an allegorical mini-collective

he and his collaborators remembered, they generously acknowledged one another’s contributions (certainly Brecht always did), often they did not bother. Most important, the group—Brecht’s “workshop”—was not only united in the belief they were working for the common (vague) goal of a world revolution, but it is also clear that Brecht gave the collaborators, both in their work and in their lives, as much as he got. True, one clearly could, especially after Brecht’s 1954 breakthrough to world fame, fault the money distribution. To tell women who stuck with him, not without tensions, through thick and thin that this or that critic today knows better how their lives should have been conducted seems arrogant. See for the most balanced account, which does not divorce feminism from class politics, Sabine Kebir’s several books following on her pioneering *Ein akzeptabler Mann?*; cf. my two review articles in the *Works Cited*.

comprising a manual worker (the lensmaker Federzoni), an ethical peasants' son (the Little Monk), and a curious youngster (Andrea), so that in the end his real treason is to have sundered curiosity from ethics and labour, to have taught Andrea "pure science" of the bourgeois, atom-bomb kind. Brecht could only go about constituting the Berliner Ensemble by making it a Luxemburgian Council, abhorred and isolated by the Stalinists in power.

Jameson therefore rightly collocates a brief chapter on Brecht's "autonomization" effects in narrative (43-51) into the part that deals with doctrine (*Lehre*, the Teaching). Semantic and syntactic form are consubstantial with the message here, the montage procedure (even thematically foregrounded in *Man is Man*) shows off different possibilities for choosing according to different interests and values. Jameson argues that Brecht's formal categories are allegorically linked to the postulated and induced audience; this justifies the central refusal of a catharsis that assumes a "general human nature." What Sabine Kebir calls the "Courage effect"—not decreeing conversion to "rightness" on the stage but letting the contrary of it transmit an awful warning to the spectator—opens up a possibility not only of appealing to those not sharing the doctrine, but also (as in the *Yeasayer / Naysayer*) to question the doctrine as to its concrete rightness. Brecht's maxim ran, "The learner is more important than the Teaching"; and real learning can only come about when the concrete particularity of the embodied situation counteracts the leveling force of conceptual reason, allowing actors and agents the choice of how best to fit the new situation, while the allegorical exemplarity escapes one-dimensional naturalism and makes their choice exemplary *for us*. Thus, each autonomous—as it were self-governing—situation acquires equal rights before the judgments of embodied reason submitted to the audience as a "Control Chorus" (as in *The Measure Taken*).

3. Precapitalist Wisdom and Technology, Artisan Intellectuals, Luxemburgian Two-way Media

Jameson's repeated references to peasantry in Brecht's worlds are among the most stimulating and provocative ones of this book. His argument is subtle and worthwhile: on the one hand, "the immemorial peasantry ... stands behind so much of [Brecht's] work"; on the other, Brecht also participates in a technological modernism with his "delight in aeroplanes and in the radio, the dimension of 'workers' to be added to that of 'peasants' in any Gramscian aesthetic alliance" (3). Here fruitful

discussions may begin, for in whose name or voice, and therefore to whom (to which classes or maybe congeries of class fractions) Brecht speaks is of a piece with how and to whom he might be useful. I doubt that Brecht's world is a village one. To characterize Brecht's stories, perhaps his friend Benjamin's essay on "The Storyteller," which allots classical precapitalist storytelling to travelers, peasants, and most of all artisans, might be of help.

Travelers, mostly involuntary, are everywhere in Brecht, from Baal, Kragler, and the early pirates through the caravan and mercenaries (see Jameson 165) of *The Exception and the Rule* and Mother Courage, almost an "eternal Wandering Jewess" damned by capitalist war, to Galileo himself, moving—not too unlike Brecht—from the cozy but philistine Venice to the big, excitingly dangerous but also rewarding Florence and finally hauled before the inquisition at the centre of power, Rome. (Can one avoid thinking of a conflation of Los Angeles and New York here, if only in the sense that Brecht was playing through the political possibilities for an intellectual, as a general staff plays through possible campaigns?) The big town or mass city—Berlin, whose shock reverberates through the icy *Primer for City-Dwellers*—is impersonal and depersonalizing, strange and most dangerous, but not unmanageable: at worst a cold jungle, swept by the winds from Lake Michigan. After Hitler, the antifascist victory is in the *Chalk Circle*'s counter-project to class power tied to Grushe's march—Titoist or Maoist *avant la lettre*—through villages and icy mountains, a plebeian *hegira* looping back to victory in the city. As Jameson notes, in Brecht "it is nature which is minimal, and the city, with its jungle and grim profusion, which [is rich]" (134).

Thus Brecht's world is not a village one but the road or forest of *Baal* or the estate of the *Chalk Circle* or *Puntila*. The semblance of peasant wisdom is deceiving—when peasants are found in the plays they are grasping and scared. Nor is there much industrial working class around: what one might call the totem-field of Fordism is represented, as Jameson notes (cf. 139 and 165-67), by machines and by the "poverty of the poor" (in the exemplary *Saint Joan of the Slaughterhouses*, a title allegorically preferable to *Stockyards*, for the slaughter concerns proletarians as well as oxen and swine, as foregrounded in the emblematic case of the worker who falls into the bacon vats). The unemployed are a Hellenic chorus of millennial plebeian suffering, oppressed more than exploited: they do not strike, they are locked out. But Benjamin's *artisans* do fit the early industrial small town (like Augsburg, traditionally "merchant urban"—cf. Jameson 139), open to the countryside river for swimming and the disreputable plebeian suburbs of Baal's taverns and sexual

freedom. For all the workshop stress on productivity, which was—together with teaching—Brecht's central stance (Jameson concludes his book on this note, 174-78), his storytelling fits Benjamin's worry about how to reprimatize values based on communal experience and tradition (in the active sense) in an increasingly reified world of mass production of commodities and people to consume them. As Brecht most revealingly observed in *The Three-penny Lawsuit*, a snapshot of the Krupp factory (that is, immediate or surface experience) doesn't advance knowledge any longer: a blueprint and organigram is needed. Brecht's simplified world of small town and wayfaring is an attempt at such a blueprint, and his hero is the small-town artisan-flyer, like the Tailor of Ulm in the splendid eponymous poem, while Yang Sun from the *Good Person* is a dire villain because he wants to fly by grinding the face of the small town, embodied in his bride-to-be Shen Te. Similarly, the bearer of his "heroic cowardice" (124) is the intellectual, an artisan commanding the technology of thinking—Me-ti, Keuner, Azdak, and the failed social experimenter Galileo. Jameson rightly observes that Brecht's fascination with China, here discussed at illuminating length, and with East Asian esthetics in general, relates to precapitalist culture (62) adopted as counter-world to the Chicago of slaughterhouses and fierce class struggles while Americanization was still being emulated by Stalin's industrializing Russia.

Jameson splendidly argues that Brecht's objective correlative to the machines, or even more to *technology*, lies in the "starkness, which emerges from the radio play" (165-66 and elsewhere). I would point out that this was precisely the one aspect in which, as both Brecht and Benjamin noted, intellectuals were, in their class essence of artisanal creativity, "objectively" allies of the proletariat: they share the delight of the master of the machine or tool or style when it works. This formal sparseness reinforced tendencies in Brecht already there from his beginnings, but in the *Hauspostille* finding outlet in heretic reversals of the severe clerical forms (the psalm, the Loyolan "exercise", the canticles accompanying the liturgic year). Similarly, Brecht translated the esoteric Buddhist—not simply Zen—world-reduction of medieval Noh into the starkness of industrial Taylorism (the minimal psychic movements indispensable for efficiency) and early Leninism, both influential on the *Neue Sachlichkeit* style in the 1920s.⁸ Jameson devotes pioneering and revealing pages to this epoch (say 1916-31) of radio

⁸ F.W. Taylor developed the "time and motion study" proposing to increase industrial productivity through a highly oppressive system for regulating work down to very fine details. Lenin strongly urged introducing some of his findings to Soviet production.

and Lindberghian monoplane. I would call these, just as the ubiquitous automobiles, space-binding machines of collective communication, and only add that it is also the time of silent film—whose importance for Brecht is underscored by the recent discovery that he was the director of the remarkable short 1923 movie “Mysteries of a Barber-Shop.” Lindbergh, Taylor, Chaplin: the “Americanization” that swept post-1918 Europe also brought the records of vaguely New Orleans “pop jazz” records—whose improvisational techniques Brecht thought of as exemplary—and the killing “Spanish flu.”

But then Fordism issues in mass unemployment, Hitlerism, and war, the conveyor-belt leads to accelerated destruction of oxen and people (to the tune of “Work faster” from the *Good Person*), Lindbergh turns out to be vitiated by his very individualistic heroism opposed to the working collective that produced his plane, and in Brecht’s mid-30s’ “Street Scene,” judging the responsibility for the car accident may be read as a parable of Fordism derailed. The enthusiasm for Lindbergh’s flying car, the airplane, left Brecht even before the arrival of the Luftwaffe dive-bombers and of the Western Allies’ wiping out Dresden and Hiroshima; enthusiasm for cars never did. New technology did not necessarily link self-governing collectives into a plebeian democracy from below, as was assumed by avant-garde enthusiasts, say Mayakovsky in *The Bedbug* for two-way radio (independently picked up by Brecht’s radio-theory that explicitly invokes utopia) or Tretyakov for two-way Soviet newspapers; it could equally be, and was, used by the Warfare and Police State. With the coming of Hitler, the new technology is seen from the skeptical point of view of the servants, like Matti, the car driver of the rich Puntila, diametrically opposed to the engineer as technocrat of “scientific management.” Brecht’s probably most important play (co-)direction was, as an improvised movie shot at the time by a very young Syberberg confirms, his 1950 adaptation of *The Private Tutor*, the bitter story of the intellectual as lackey of a boorish upper class.

4. *Twists and Turns, Today*

Brecht is then not to be understood simply as grist for academic sausage mills, not even similar to his closest English parallel combining drama and politics (but not poetry!), G.B. Shaw. Jameson’s parallels to Pound and Eliot bring about useful estrangements of the Left through the Right: but their plays are too slight, even *Murder in the Cathedral*. Nor can Brecht be dealt with as Eliot superciliously proposed we deal with Blake (quoted in Jameson 23): a great poet landed with an aberrant mythology, which we should endure by suspending our disbelief just so

long as it takes to get at his poetry. (This was Martin Esslin's position, except that he was writing, as it were, under Pitt, and had to disjoin the poetry and the thought horizons more sharply.) True, Brecht is taught in literature or theatre classes and there is a "Brecht industry" (in which I have toiled); theatre makes everything theatrical, Brecht complained, and academic studies make everything academic. To this Jameson opposes with full right a central distinction between Brecht and "any number of other 'great writers'": "some more general lesson" of joyous enablement, the lesson of his "method" (29). Beyond philology, this is his "portable" (105) use.

One of Jameson's felicitous choices is to dwell at length on Brecht's *Me-ti* collection of aphorisms and anecdotes, accurately subtitled *The Book of Twists and Turns*. One very instructive anecdote, "Tu Wishes to Learn Class Struggle and Learns Sitting," recounts how the impatient neophyte revolutionary Tu (read Ruth Berlau) came to Master Me-ti and got instructed in proper sitting instead:

... for we are just now sitting and we want to learn while sitting. Tu said, If one always strives to take up the most comfortable posture and get the best out of what there is, in brief if one strives after enjoyment (*Genuss*), how can one then fight? Me-ti said, If one does not strive after enjoyment, does not want to get the best out of what there is nor take up the best posture, why then should one fight? (*Werke* 18: 176-77)

While accepting the doctrinal goal, "struggle of classes," Me-ti (guess who) insists its *raison d'être* must durably inform the behaviour of those learning how to go after the goal: "progressing is more important than being progressive" was one of Brecht's aphorisms. Progressing or sitting engages the whole body, a sensorium not reduced solely to cerebral ideas but rather using these as points of orientation. The judgment to be passed on this might be the one passed on the engaging Boy in *He Who Says No*, whose refusal to die when not absolutely necessary is called "not heroic but reasonable."

How, then, to summarize at least central elements of Brecht's method? I would point out three that the method comprises or entails. First, as Jameson strongly argues (70, 90), a number of his categories—often marked by neologisms (stance, *Grundgestus*, estrangement...)—have cognitive significance on a par with, but usually much richer than, a specialized, "only conceptual" philosophy. They are transportable but not a "system," since they follow the rule that can be educed from the *Yeasayer / Naysayer* analysis, and which (as I have argued in *Lessons*)

requires *our stance to correspond to our situation*, and to reach the stance by *a careful observation of the state of affairs, taking into account the embodied nature and the interests of the actors that constitute it*. This rule of Brecht's coincides with positions developed in the same period by Sartre and Merleau-Ponty, or by Bakhtin: "there is no essence outside of a concrete situation" and "any empirical situation partakes of imagination or ideology" (cf. Jameson 168-70).

Second, this orientation to practice (Jameson stresses it time and again) is to be taught by teachers-learners, Brechtian Sages very similar to Chaucer's Clerk of Oxenforde: "gladly wolde he lerne, and gladly teche." It resembles a Nietzschean joyous knowledge,⁹ yet one informed by a militant Marxist socialism acutely aware of the necessities to adapt any -ism, especially one's own, to new types of experience in the mass capitalism of world wars, as humanity enters upon the Novums of "a whole new world of relationships, like the new world of Galileo's physics or the new world of socialist construction, into which writer and reader alike must penetrate by means of daring exploration, and appropriation" (168). Brecht's *personae* or "faces" combine the Teacher-cum-Chinese Sage with the Trickster (indeed sometimes the sly Rogue); as Bakhtin noted, each of them carries around itself its own world of relationships.

Third, as one would expect from Jameson's life-long engagement with utopia, he does not fail to point out the "utopian and salvational" aspect of Brecht, in which pragmatics and pedagogy converge: not nearly so tinged with Gnostic religiosity as either in Benjamin or in Bloch, but running just as deep—as befits the salvational nature of socialism. It is a utopia of communal creativity or productivity (people can produce shoes or love, Brecht held), of constructing the Novum through Marx's "living labour," diametrically opposed to the capitalist definition of productivity as what yields profit (see Jameson 174-77). Brecht operates in a tension between a warm and a cold pole, each of which elicits a major *tour de force* from Jameson. He comes at an almost Kropotkinian sense of co-operative instinct through the "sublime" line in the *Chalk Circle* "Terrible is the temptation to goodness" (173-74); and at a hard-boiled *plumpes denken* (crude thinking) through the great Brecht-Weill finales to Acts 1 and 2 of *The Threepenny Opera* (144-48 and 133), which demand that the little people get a cut from the big loaf here and now—and envisage the horrors which in fact consumed our century in pursuit of this absolutely overriding demand, equally Leninist and

⁹ Parallels have been convincingly presented by Grimm and Šubik; further work is to be expected on how these parallels were modified and subsumed in Brecht's life and work.

Fordist. The astoundingly many deaths in Brecht indicate how strongly subjectivity is for him intertwined with death: we have a large lesson to learn from him there too.

What Way of thinking or method is, then, the key to successful acting (in all its senses)? Toward the end, Jameson rightly considers that Brecht's insistence on change has been co-opted by the whirligig of capitalism (168-70). In these times, Brecht's slogan, "Change the world—it needs it!" should be emended into something like, "Change the world away from profit-motive warfare—or we shall all perish!" But: the emendation would itself be based on Brecht, on his admirable hardboiled optimism. This too Jameson clearly transmits. The author of *Brecht and Method* takes, I believe, his place alongside the great and most fruitful ancestors of Brechtian commentary, Benjamin from the "German takeoff" seminal phase of Brechtian criticism (in all senses) 1929-39, and Barthes from the "world takeoff" phase after 1954. The field of forces within which Brecht is triangulated speaks for itself: the most frequent names in the Index are, beside these two, André Jolles and his "short forms" as "radicals" for Brecht's forms, and the political epistemologists, so to speak: Hegel, Lenin, Lukács, Marx, Sartre (less frequent but by no means absent: Adorno, Lacan, Deleuze).¹⁰

At the end, however, perhaps the reader should compare this whole Brechtian and Jamesonian focus on method or Way with the robuster attitude of Marx: "Truth includes not only the result but also the way.... [T]he true inquiry is the unfolded truth, whose scattered members are gathered up in the result." (Marx, my quote somewhat modifies the translation from p. 72). In this Post-Fordist epoch (but not necessarily beyond it!), we may well be condemned to investigation only, to the *membra disjecta* with no concrete political results. So be it, then we must have the method. But Marx's observation may remind us that, if we apply Brecht's imperative to historicize, method without concrete results is worth just as little as results arrived at with wrong methods. Brecht's very particular joy of and in fruition, which he pursued as single-mindedly as orthodox Christianity rejects it, encompasses also the—always provisional—fruits. He left us both.

¹⁰ One complaint on *Brecht and Method*: its incomplete and strangely organized Index. Incomplete: it does not mention stance, Noh play, or the poem "The Cranes," it does not excerpt the very rich footnote pages; strangely organized, for it puts categories under individuals (!), so that "Weimar" comes subordinated to "Weill," "allegory" under Brecht, "modernism" is divided between Adorno and Brecht, "capital/ism" between Brecht and *Mother Courage* (but absent from Marx and his *Capital*), peasants between Brecht (where they come under the misleading "working class and peasants") and Mao.... It would be much preferable to itemize both names and key notions in a redone index, with outright errors also corrected.

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***D. Probing into Counter-
Revolutionary Times (1992-2010)***

Andromeda: Elegy from a Collapsar (1992)
(More Lessons in Buddhist Cybermarxism)

Die Hochwelt—verloren, die Wahnfahrt, die Trugfahrt
Paul Celan (thanks to Sieghild B.)

We are like somebody wha hears
A wonderfu' language and mak's up his mind
To write poetry in it—but ah!
It's impossible to learn it, we find,
Tho' we'll never ha'e ony use again
For ither languages o' ony kind.
Hugh MacDiarmid, "Ode to All the Rebels"

Headnote (as usual in old East Asian poetry): The legend of Andromeda has this beautiful princess delivered to a dragon-like monster while chained to a rock (which I was shown in Jaffa harbour) & rescued by Perseus who wields the petrifying head of Medusa. I have also used elements of the fivefold Buddhist scheme correlating passions, colours, shapes, etc., which distinguishes Yoku = desire, Soku = senses/sensuality, Ai = sexual love, & Man = satisfaction, pride, as attendants to the central Kongô bodhisattva; the Difficult Spot is a spacetime where the voice of the enlightened cannot be heard, so that even the Decision for Enlightenment is missed. Of the five bodhisattvas, Yoku = sorrowing over people's suffering & determining to bring them to liberation; Soku = approaches to people; Ai presents the coming into being of compassion for people, inseparable from/consubstantial with wisdom; Man may be arrogance or experiencing the joy of people's accomplished Enlightenment; while Kongô, their crown so to speak, is the emblem of action, the deliverer of people unto the Great Bliss (tairaku). The practitioner of these 5 Secrets (gohimitsu) enters into a relation of kaji or mutual empowerment with each of these deities.

Is this too much to expect of you to swallow, dear reader? I wish I knew who you were, then I could answer this question. Since I not only don't know you but cannot even imagine your face, I must hew close to the only certainty I possess, the evidence of my experience (which is interesting because both mine & not only mine). I hate obfuscation, and I really don't aim to make your life difficult. I am simply trying to

account for our difficult life. This is a form (the most pleasurable form) of trying to make life easier, of subverting the difficulties we live and learn among.

My subverted Buddhist scheme is here connected with an ambiguous, spiralling march thru various alienations—a Division of the Kingdom, as in Lear, as in Korea, India, Palestine, Yugoslavia, USSR, our century's experience. At the end there is a collectively hopeful yet also personally hopeless self-liberation, again subverting macho heroism in favour of Gramscian dialectics: "pessimism of the intellect, optimism of the will."

Details: "Freilich" ("Of course") echoes Brecht's late poem about surviving a flood, "On Reading Horace." Percy Shelley & Paul Celan, both of whom did not—and yet did—survive, are also present; so are several other great political poets (Marx, Wordsworth, Whitman, Blake); Charles (pronounced sharrl) is Fourier, but his meta-animals were friendly emblems, regretted here. Celan's cryptic verse indicates the loss of a "high world" coupled to delusion, illusion or deception.

1.

Andromeda, i think of you often these days
 & i see a perfected body of beauty receding fast
 Hugging the wrong end of a vertiginous telescope:
 As desire sharpens the unfailing distance, swings the creaking sextant,
 You swim back into its kenning, more precious now than Prometheus
 Rockbound both of you, having gained nothing
 Except your chains & legends, lost nothing
 But our whole world.

Pray you, undo this button.

Lost, the cool clear highlands of enlightened lust--
 Desire, YOKU sorrowing over all our sufferings,
 Irate piston drive for liberation of all,
 The half-moon of your face with the high brows
 Of wondering Nô-mask woman written on the night sky,
 The black velvet night of galaxies in your eyes.

Bliss it was in that night's day to be alive,
 Full of the thrill of hope, cognizing
 A distant, attainable globe.

The round horizon, rock-

Bejewelled, how did it grow iridescent, fish
 Putrefying from the head? Impoverished Lear
 Opts for the market economy, divides the kingdom,
 & love is no longer a bond but exchange for land: the Serbian
 Wolverine, the Croatian weasel, kill kill kill kill
 All the bloodied Cordelias dead, branch banks
 Tear the petrified countries limb from limb, the communist
 Brotherhood of nations is from blasted Bosnia
 By hired bandits forcibly ripped.

Pray you undo this button.

Yet in the female just here,
 Bristling with hindsight's razor edges
 Knee-deep in needless skeletons, doesn't there dance
 A legend, memorably read off in retreat, in defeat?

Desire is the only way into the Great Bliss,
 Lotus-flower growing most purely out of the mud,
 Undeified. Two-faced doors: where beyond the Self
 Dragon love is shared in lazy coils,
 No chains bind, no body is rock-fast, for
 The rocks themselves float, submergible islands
 Clashing & separating again to let the future thru.
 In our loss
 We are bound into Selves again, privatized, deprived,
 & the depraved desire decomposes
 Into rocks & monsters, nation & class & gender & Church & State,
 Shines in rainbow: red, sere, white, green.

O love of comrades
 Full-Moon-like compassionate
 This concrete turn-off
 Clover-leaf-tangled astray
 Flittering like a firefly

2.

Yet: a rose
 (Cordelia, dispossessed, demure)

Yet a rose in the fallow year-round
 Gives leave for questions to arise
 On the homebody of Nowhere,
 The somebody of Nothing & No-Self
 The coarse & subtle delusions of the Self's body,
 The searing world's No-body
 (Some names to be named)

Red is the colour of hot blood & swelling sex-organs:
 Lust for one, AI is compassion for all, without which
 No wisdom, no attachment & detachment, the cruel poetics
 Of unruly tragicomedy here below.

3.

The yellow suns implode into red dwarves, lightless holes,
 & the quasars blur in our polluted sweating lenses,
 Amid insistent buzz of insects, where we bitterly drown.

What have we learned in the rabbit-warren cities?
 Your self-growing body is, yet is not, of your bygone parents, O
 Andromeda, detach yourself pious & ruthless
 & grow on, grow into that synchronically created,
 Not self-sufficient, never quite separated
 Woman & Subject, our last line of defense.

Advance is the best defense: How do we approach people,
 Deluded by thick pixels? How call up & fortify
 The still uncorrupted witnesses of sensation, SOKU overcoming
 scopophilia,
 Disease of the still non-dialogic eye? How establish
 The feedback of moistening body to crystal knowledge,
 The undeluded Subject's
 Bearing & place? Like the cricket, only
 The dry shell of Socialism is left
 —Thou, Fortune, be my goddess—
 Was all consumed in its Summer cry?

4.

O Charles, thy meta-polar bears! White foxes, snow
 Owls blinking in the searing cold, geese
 Shot down for their eiderdown, furriers
 At the end of tether, the harsh small sun,
 Arctic & Antarctic holes in the ozone,
 Uranium mines, death skulls, the void of mind,
 Renegades all around, water in the head.

All satisfaction rings false today. MAN as a lie,
 As arrogance, not a wave within the oceanic joy
 Of people's ongoing Enlightenment. No
 Mutual empowerment bonds people & the cosmic powers,
 Allegories of society. Hypocrite corporate Caesars,
 Balding, stumbling, without laurels, failing, always
 Bailed out again, heedless embody our Difficult Spot:
 An offal-bin planet, where ingrown passions
 Grow perverse like a toenail, attraction
 May only be attack, & the Decision for Enlightenment
 Might be missed, must be built out of dog-shit.
 The poor Fool was hanged, the immune system
 Cannot cope with capitalism. Humanity may be no more.

Should Winter pass, we shall celebrate
 The blank feast of Nirvana with snowshoe hare
 On the cool high mountain, the Kilimanjaro of the mind.

5.

The teardrop shape of your face again, the
Meditative apperception, the fertile chaos giving birth
To dancing stars, the ancient dragon disenchanted
Into Perseus, & *yin* & *yang* finally together
Flying off above Jaffa, looking at Lenin in the unpetrifying mirror,
O Percy, the stained radiance of searing ice
Murmuring forth, unbound from encrusted protective
Bondage, young cicadas chirping in the south wind:
A new conception, KONGÔ in the mandala center, delivering.

Freilich, how many of us shall survive, agitating
Subjects, wry Edgars after the tragic myth of history,
The muddy waters of all these radioactive floods,
The molecularly tailored wolfhounds of heaven baying at us
From the robocops' leashes, the nuclei of our cells
Constantly evaded; yet forming anew, like unto the lotus
Flowering irrefutably, like the slyly rational snake
Shedding its skin to slither forth, apple
In its serpentine socialist mouth, again?

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**“I have no soul and I must laugh or cry”:
Interview on SF and Travelling with Tami Hager¹ (2004)**

Tami Hager: The first question is about the connection between traveling in science fiction and traveling geographically. You travel constantly and you have read lots of SF...

Darko Suvin: hmmm (modest noises).

TH: Is there any connection, is there some parallel between travel and SF?

DS: My argument would be that there are two levels in SF, the level of thematic focusing and then what the Russian Formalists call the *motivirovka* or narrative justification (it's not psychological motivation) of that theme. That would, in significant SF at least, make the travel part as a rule relatively unimportant. The travel belongs to the framework which sets important things in motion: but what is important is what you find when you come there. There may be some exceptions, of course, where the finding happens on a spaceship during travel; but in that case usually the space in the spaceship itself is somehow changed, for example, it grows into a hydroponic jungle—I'm thinking of Brian Aldiss's early novels, and there are some similar pioneering stories by Heinlein, it was really popular at some point. In Aldiss's novel there is some kind of mutiny or explosion in a spaceship, and hundreds of years later the n^{th} generation has forgotten that they were on a spaceship, they think this is their world. This is a huge spaceship miles and miles long. The hydroponic plants have escaped from the lab and grown all over into a jungle. Different tribes developed on various parts of the spaceship (in the States they made a TV series based on this idea). So the people in these mini-worlds don't know they are traveling. The hero, a kind of Columbus, finds out that they are on a spaceship and goes through various adventures, finally finding the captain's room. Through the windows he sees the stars. For him it is a huge surprise, since the inhabitants of the ship don't know that there is something beyond their “universe.”²

¹ The interview was conducted in Tel Aviv, March 1994, for a local geographic and travel periodical (the name of which escapes me). To my knowledge this interview was never published. I tried to find out about it for several years without success, and among my then friends in Tel Aviv all thought it had never appeared.

² The works referred to in this paragraph are: Heinlein, “Universe” (1941); Aldiss, *Non-Stop* (US title *Starship*, 1958); and there were at least two such TV series with forgettable titles, one in the USA and one in Canada.

This type of story seems to me in some ways an emblem of SF. The traveling has, as I called it in my *Metamorphoses*, an ontolytic effect. That is, it dissolves your perception of reality, in order that you may replace it with a new perception. The dissolving itself is necessary and sometimes maybe pleasant, but it's a means to an end. So, if the readers of your journal are the kind of people who are actually interested in driving by car or bus for 10 hours and looking out at the landscape, then I think the analogies with SF travel would be relatively small. If they are, however, like me: I am bored to tears with travel, I just want to get there, then analogous interest might exist. My favorite means of travel would be Aladdin's lamp. You rub the lamp and you're there, so you wouldn't have to go through the airport, and wait there and sit in the plastic chairs, and so on. I can very well see that the process of traveling can be very pleasurable for some people. Why not? But I myself, maybe because I've done much of it, although I've probably done less than some of your readers—I'm not interested in travel per se. I travel because I want to go to places like Rome, Israel or Japan, because I have an interest in these places for different reasons.

TH: *Isn't the real traveling about knowing different new worlds?*

DS: Well, the interesting part is what you find there once you arrive. Now are you asking about the civic *persona* of Darko Suvin or about SF?

TH: *Both. I think there are similarities. I think that people who have interest in SF are interested in other worlds.*

DS: Yes but you can do this in an armchair..., you don't have to travel. People interested in SF are not necessarily interested in physical traveling. In fact, it might be considered an alternative, instead of traveling you read SF. So I think it depends on the kind of individual. One should do a sociological study about the correlation between SF reading and travel. It would be interesting to know whether there is a correlation. I would imagine that SF could either push you to travel because it stimulates your interest in other places, or on the contrary it could inhibit it because you'd say: I do all of it in my reading. What is interesting for me in SF is the image of different and yet possible worlds, which in literary theory we put into capitals, PW. One of the basic techniques to write a SF novel—usually not a shorter story but a novel—is to choose the formula of the travel, the quest, so that you traverse a certain territory, and while traversing it you also begin to understand some central matters about it: what kind of beings are living in it? What kind of laws exist in it, or what kind of social organization? Whatever puzzle is hidden in that territory, you begin to understand it by traveling through it, which is a very old technique, not invented by SF, but invented by previous types of fiction.

TH: Like Don Quixote?

DS: For example *Don Quixote*, that is to say the picaresque adventures. But I think it's much older than that. You have it in late Hellenic literature, in Apollodorus, for example. Why? In my opinion because it is based on, or it is correlative to, the central conceit or *topos* or metaphor of the Road of Life, Dao for the Chinese. It's a Way, with a capital W. So that your traveling through space is somehow connected, metaphoric-analogically, with traveling in time. This was even theorized in *The Time Machine*. So you have it in *Wilhelm Meister*, in *Don Quixote*, and in a number of famous English novels from the 18th century, like *Tom Jones*. And you certainly have it in SF now. Personally, of course, all of us travel on the road of life. Some of us are more conscious of the metaphor than others. I am very conscious; my book of poetry, written in imitation of the Chinese style, is called *The Long March*: a title not merely owed to Mao Zedong, but to the road of life, which is a very old thing. Actually, I was thinking of Raymond Williams's "long march through the institutions" when I chose it.

Why do I translate my time into space? I don't know, of course, why do we do what we do, why do we choose a profession, fall in love, you just know it happens. However, once it happens you can retrospectively try to understand some of it. That's why we hear sentences like: "Oh my god, how could I make that terrible mistake", or "It went so well, how did I manage to do it"....

There are *extrinsic* reasons why to travel. For example, one is kicked out from a country. In Israel you should know a lot about it. Such a thing enforces traveling by necessity, usually not in pleasant ways. This happened to me a couple of times in my life. Once when I was a very small boy, not so small as to be unconscious, especially since you tend to grow up quickly during stress. And that was during World War II, when in Yugoslavia my family and I had to leave my native city, Zagreb, since our life was threatened in the German-occupied zone, to go to the Italian-occupied zone, because the Italians were more easily bribed or in general not so well organized. So we traveled to an island, and in 1943 when Italy collapsed my father joined the partisans, and my mother and I went by a little fishing boat to Southern Italy, which was at that point liberated (in Fall 1943). We travelled in a very crowded fishing boat, with 300 refugees. The islands were being evacuated because they had been liberated by Tito's Partisans and the Germans were coming down the coast. We ran away among minefields, with bombers overhead, who didn't bomb us because we were not worth bombing, but it was not exactly pleasant.

The second time it happened to me in a much more gilded way, but still not entirely pleasant. I left Yugoslavia in 1967, to go to the States

at first and a year later to Canada. I remember my wife and I went to the States by ship. The ship arrived in Montreal actually. It was the first time I saw Montreal. We had one big wooden trunk, like 19th-Century immigrants to America...

TH: The same as you see in movies when immigrants arrive at Ellis Island?

DS: Yes, yes, exactly. In the trunk I had my wife's and my winter coats and my winter shoes—and books. And then from Montreal we took a train to Albany. I went to a job in Amherst, Massachusetts, a nice place. So this was another emigration. The ex-Yugoslav government called my emigration an economic one, as different from political emigration.

TH: Was it because they didn't have any work for you?

DS: Well, it was because I had a big quarrel at the University and I resigned, and yes I left under the category of trying to find work somewhere else. It was legal, with a passport, and it wasn't on a crowded little ship. No, my wife and I had our own cabin. But still, it was an existential shift, I wasn't traveling for pleasure.

So this category I call extrinsic, and please don't take the term seriously because I have just invented it, I'm sure I could find a better term; but it's enforced, it's an existential shift, and unfortunately it characterizes not only Jews but millions of people in this century. Whole populations were shipped back and forth, not to mention millions of individuals on their own. This is a completely different existential experience than the intrinsic or *inner-directed* travel, that is, you travel because you like it and you want to see things. It may be done out of general curiosity. When Edmund Hillary was asked why go up Mt. Everest, he answered: "because it's there."

So you go to Greece because it's there, in other words, Greece is not something that you could see in most other places. Each individual has her/his preferences about where to go and what to do there. When I finished studying in England, in the Summer of 1955, I hitchhiked from Scotland to Naples. It was very pleasant. You meet people and you see places. If any of your readers like this type of traveling, I don't see any reason why they shouldn't do it. Personally, at some point when you live in Canada, and have 4 or 5 or 6 months of minus 20, minus 30, minus 40, then there is a very good habit that, depending on your holidays, at some time between the beginning of December and the middle of January, almost everybody goes South. That is to say to the Caribbean, to Mexico, to Florida maybe—I, myself, would not be caught dead in Florida. I went a number of times to Cancun and Puerto Vallarta and Jamaica and Barbados, etc. But I must say that I was always feeling a bit uncomfortable. Usually you go for 10 or 12 days, and that's fair

enough. You have some company, your spouse or your partner: if you are me, you have lots of writings with you and you even may write something there; and you swim. And you may have one or two guided tours, to the local waterfalls or whatever, and for 10 or 12 days this is bearable, but just barely. Because I am aware that the army is patrolling the hotel, and that outside there are a lot of people who hate me because I'm rich and they're poor. Although in fact I'm not rich, but for them if I can come on an airplane and live in a hotel, I'm rich, quite rightly. So this is not a terrifically comfortable way of living, nor am I comfortable in that position. I've never been on the upper scale of either power or economics, and I think there's something alienating about it. If I have to choose between that and sleeping on the street, I would rather be rich, but I think both are rather alienating. So I don't like this type of tourism, and in the last 15 years I have rather endured minus 40 than go to Jamaica.

TH: That's interesting.

DS: Well, I was also busy, and I saved all my traveling for the Summer. There were all kinds of reasons, but basically I was rather uncomfortable, being a socialist. It was not simply an "ideological" thing. It was just looking at people and knowing that they must hate you, and rightly so. They must, because they live in corrugated tin shacks. So, if your readers could go to Jamaica or Barbados, I would say yes of course! It's beautiful, it's absolutely stunning. But do understand that there is an underside, and at some point, if you have a little bit of consciousness, it will begin bothering you. It begins bothering me about the 10th or 11th day and I'm happy that on the 12th day I'm leaving. So that kind of traveling is really over for me at present—unless it were something that I had never seen. Yes, of course, I would love to go to Angkor Vat, or to Singapore, or to Indonesia, or to Australia, or to South Africa, where I have never been, but three days are enough.

TH: So you get to places because of conferences?

DS: In a conference I don't have time to get out of the hotel. But yes, three days before or after a conference. So what kind of traveling is really inner-directed, and is it of a superior sort? There is tourism, which is fine, but I think it is not the highest form. The highest form for me is to get to know a little bit deeper—even though you cannot pretend to really know it fully and deeply—some other ways of people living together, which is usually called cultures, no?

TH: This is your interest in Japan?

DS: Yes. Although I had the same feeling when I first came to New York.

TH: So in your life it is a repeated experience?

DS: Yes, you are absolutely right.... One of the ways of explaining Japan to myself is that it is halfway to the Moon. It's the nearest to a science-fictional place that you can find on this globe. It's so different.

TH: And didn't you have the same feeling when you switched from Yugoslavia to the States?

DS: But I studied at Yale.

TH: I mean the first time you landed there?

DS: Oh when I first came to New York and then Yale? Well, I had already seen a lot of Hollywood movies. Of course, it was strange in many ways. You have to understand I believe in the Monroe doctrine, that America is for the Americans. Which doesn't mean that I hate America. I don't like the Europeans who live off America and go around foul-mouthing it—Adorno, for example. I think there's something unfair in that. But it's not my place, and I didn't make it mine, and their problems are thank god not mine, because their problems are awful: a dying empire, quite suicidal.

I came to Japan at a different set of existential premises in my life, it was not enforced either by scholarship or by exile, it was really my choice. I could have just as well lived without it, I didn't need it for my tenure, in fact it cost me money, so it was really an act of intellectual love, so to speak.

TH: And it was like going to the Moon?

DS: Halfway. Because obviously the physical situation is the same as everywhere else, and people are people, they have one head and not two heads, two hands and not four hands or tentacles or something, so it's not quite SF. And yet the whole system, not only the writing—which gives me some problems in Israel too—but much more than that, the system of cultural presuppositions, which underlies people's behavior towards you, was really strange, even for one who has lived in a number of places all over the so-called Western world: from a periphery like Yugoslavia and Italy (my favourite country), to Paris and England, where I studied, and all over the States. I've been in the tropics, as a tourist, and I've been more or less all over Europe. And it has never hit me so, except in China; but I've only been inside China itself—as distinct from Hong Kong—once. Hong Kong is not real China because most people know English, and all my friends there talk English.

In a way, what is so strange about Japan, in addition to the fact that I've been there long enough to begin really getting into it—which I haven't been in China and which I haven't been in India, where I also visited briefly—is that a number of civilization facilities, the buildings, the streets, the streetcars, and so on, are the same as in any major city (I

mainly live in Tokyo when I go to Japan). So in fact the Japanese, as all other Asians will tell you, are the most Westernized of the Asians; and yet, although they have lots of neon signs, like any big city in the world, these signs are all in an unreadable script. I think the paradox of Japan is that you can recognize the genus but not the species. You know it's a dog, but I've never seen this dog species. Therefore the halfway to the Moon is so interesting. If it was wholly the Moon you would say: this is so strange, but I cannot understand it, it's a freak. But of course the Japanese are not in the Moon, they have one head and not two heads, sexual equipment of the same kind, etc. The mixture of the familiar and the strange is what makes it really strange: if it were totally strange you would just blank out, you would not understand anything, you would say "Oh my god, let me run back to the hotel and get the guide!" You would be in an existential panic.

TH: It struck me before we started talking that to understand Japan takes the same technique used to understand SF. In your books you said that SF is a mix of the strange with the familiar and now you apply the same expression to Japan.

DS: Yes, but those situations are different. Reading a book, you are in your comfortable study, while visiting Japan you are immersed in the strange reality. The difference is that the books are in you, but you are in Japan. I took apartments in Japan, I had to buy food, I had to buy toilet paper, I went to the saké pubs. I did these things with my extremely primitive, rudimentary, and no doubt totally impolite Japanese, without the proper honorific suffixes and all that. I therefore really had some occasions to be more than a tourist, because I never go to a hotel in Japan, unless it is to visit visiting Americans. When a great US professor like Jameson comes to Japan, I visit him in a hotel. But I myself couldn't afford it, and I'm not interested in it. If I want to stay in a hotel, I can just as well stay at home! So the presuppositions for their life, for their relationships to each other and the universe, suddenly reveal themselves to me in very little details—and they are different. Therefore you begin questioning your own presuppositions which up to that point you possibly haven't known that you have, that is, you practically have them but you never thought about it.

TH: But doesn't SF have the same function, namely, to question your own presuppositions?

DS: There are two possibilities. Either Japan is similar to SF or the observer brings the same categories to both, you decide which, I don't know.

TH: I think Japan is similar to SF.

DS: I would say myself that it's a mixture of both. I don't think I invented

it totally, either in the case of SF or of Japan, on the other hand I obviously have a certain stance....

TH: Maybe it is the researcher in you, who likes questioning yourself and your culture?

DS: Yes, but it's also a peculiar stance which not every researcher has. I know many very good researchers who have a different stance, which wants to know more of the same. My stance is conditioned by my whole life-history and what I went through. I have acquired a certain stance, though surely it is not absolutely unique. In fact I think each of its elements exists somewhere else, but the way that they are brought together may be peculiar to me.

At any rate, suddenly you begin to realize that you have certain presuppositions; and second, you begin to think "why do I have these presuppositions?" The way I can best describe it to you is to refer to an overall hypothesis which I made in an article on Barthes, in *The Canadian Review of Comparative Literature* for December 1991, and my title was "The Soul and the Sense." For, the basic realization that struck me in Japan, where people have sense—in many senses of that word, from sensual to making sense—is that I HAD A SOUL, which I thought I had evacuated when I became a disgusted atheist at age 12 or so. But I found out that what I had in fact evacuated was the name of the soul and maybe some external areas of it, but at the center—the center, which is this little billiard ball that exists somewhere inside you apparently—there was still "le Moi" as Descartes would say. And since it's not fashionable to be religious we call it the Self, or if you are a Freudian the Ego, but this totally hangs together with and is derived from the monotheistic Jewish-Christian-Islamic idea of some kind of personal essence. Now in East Asia they have never had the necessity to imagine a creator, and therefore never had a soul, or they never had a soul and therefore they never had the necessity to imagine a creator. They either had a self-sustaining creation, which shouldn't be called creation, because there is no creator—the Way, the Road, the Dao; or they have 80 myriad kami, local deities, and so it comes to the same: there is no gentleman with a white beard up there who puts a soul inside you. That was quite a shock to me, and it put into question a great number of quite fundamental, central, basic or important things in our culture and in my understanding of it.

For example, one of the problems of old-style Marxism, I think, is that it was too monotheistic. It not only culminated in the so-called cult of the personality of Stalin, but there is a problem when Marx says there are "iron laws," in the preface to the *Capital*. The concept of iron laws comes from Newton, roughly—and Newton was a believing Christian,

he believed that God made the universe and there are some laws to it. He then made them into laws of physics, being an 18th-Century Englishman.... I am not saying there are no regularities. I'm not saying we shouldn't talk about laws, but we should know where the concept of law, "lex," comes from. It comes from Roman jurisprudence and monotheistic theology (even if philosophers like to talk about the Greek word "logos"). But "the laws of nature" is a concept Newton or Marx could not have formulated unless there were the concept of laws, and the concept of laws comes from Roman law and from monotheistic theology. I am working further on this.³

So you begin asking yourself, "Why?" Why couldn't this have been different? Which I think is the basic question in utopian fiction, and if not in all SF, at least in that SF which interests me. "Couldn't it have been different?"; or as the Gershwin Brothers put it, "It Ain't Necessarily So!"

That kind of voyage seems to me—and I do not pretend that it must be so for everybody—the highest kind of voyage. I am not talking about the jet travel to Japan, I wish I didn't have to fly to Japan. It's horrible actually, and the travel from the airport to the city of Tokyo is unbelievably horrible, the traffic jams and so on. What is important is being there, if we can call that traveling, that is to say, being elsewhere.

TH: You can, why not? I mean I see it as traveling, I think it's the most interesting traveling actually.

DS: Well that's the result of traveling, the goal of traveling. But anyway, if you wish to be broadminded and think that this is travel, then I think traveling is what (metaphorically and if we're lucky empirically, experientially) allows us to get outside of, and look back at, our normal selves, at our norms, the norms of our society, our psychology, even the norms of our philosophy and epistemology which are truly historical. In China it wasn't so for me, because I didn't get far enough. Now, conversely, that was the classical function of China in the Enlightenment. China or the Noble Savage in America intended to show us either what we are or what we are not but could be, that is, a good example, a bad example, or an awful warning.

³ *Note 2010:* Alas I haven't had time to do much about law or *lex*, though I am now working on the epistemology of science and will maybe get there, with the help of some excellent stuff about law/*lex* from Zilsel in 1942 but quite forgotten, it seems. I did work out the (to my mind) central maleficent implications of monotheism in "Inside the Whale, or *etsi communismus non daretur*" (*Critical Quarterly* 2007), now in my book *Defined by a Hollow* at P. Lang, London 2010. The final chapter of the book also gets a bit into the epistemology of science, and I've developed this much further in "On the Horizons of Epistemology and Science." *Critical Quarterly* 52.1 (2010): 68-101.

TH: *Or what we know and what we don't know. Many things bring you to compare two realities.*

DS: Yes. Well, of course in literature it's a little bit different, because you compare fictional reality with an empirical reality, and here you compare two original realities.

TH: *Does one seem to you more fictional than other?*

DS: It's very tricky. While I am there—say in Japan—it's not less real.

TH: *It's a different encyclopedia, that's for sure, I mean you don't encounter completely different aliens, like those from Mars, but it's still a different encyclopedia, and you know your own, but do you know theirs really?*⁴

DS: Some very influential schools of modern criticism would tell you that all realities are constructed, right? And are "realities" the right concept? But what I'm trying to formulate is something different, which is the process of becoming conscious of that. That is to say, all realities may be constructed, but you're socialized into this construction, and you don't see that it is constructed, it's Plato's cave more or less: you're in the cave, you don't know that you're in the cave. Japan shows me the cave. This is the function of Japan for me, partly—and without romanticizing it, I would hate to be an employee of Honda. I prefer my particular vantage point of somebody who doesn't get a salary in Japan, stands outside the system and yet lives inside it. This peculiar liminal position, as an anthropologist would say, has for me the function of liberating one from the cave. Exactly as Plato says, you get out into the daylight and you realize that this was a cave with a torch flickering and the shadows on the wall. Now the problem with Plato is that he thought there was a real reality which was in the Heavens, whereas I have only maybe another cave. But once you've entered into another cave you have seen that it's a cave. So while we have lost Plato's heavenly location, certainty, we still have the basic liberating insight, which is: you are in a cave, please become aware of it. This is what I like about Plato; the broad daylight of Plato's I don't think I could share, it's his, not mine. But the fact that there's something else that makes you realize that this is not what it looks like, this is not what you have been led to believe, what your spiritual eye has been made to see. And this is of course the main point of Brecht's work and of his concept of estrangement. I tried then to apply it in my work on SF and utopian fiction. Estrangement, so far as I understand it, is to allow a space, a distance, between the event

⁴ Ms Hager, a Ph.D. student at Tel Aviv University, is here referring to Umberto Eco's notion of a "cultural encyclopedia" which each of us, and every social group, possesses as a, so to speak, operative aspect of our brain(s).

and the interpretation, in which space the interpretation is no longer automatic but becomes self-reflexive. Why do I do this interpretation? What are my instruments? In other words, I have a microscope through which I'm looking at the world. It is not true that I'm looking with the naked eye, there's no such thing as the naked eye. My eye has been socialized through the school, the family, television and god knows what. My eye—and more importantly, the brain behind the eye—has been socialized.

Now, I also think that this introduces a new factor besides the curiosity with which we began here. Curiosity to my mind is initially positive. It can become silly, you know, like the curiosity of the public in freak-shows at fairs: the woman with a beard and all these monstrosities you gape at, the three-headed calf etc. So of course curiosity can be abused, like anything, but basically I'm curious in some ways (some friends have pointed out that this can be read in two ways...). Nonetheless, curiosity per se is not quite enough. If we now apply my reasoning to my reason, "why do I reason this way?", I would say basically because I live in a world I'm not satisfied with. If I were satisfied with it, curiosity would be enough. I would go to Greece and swim and look at the Acropolis. But I would not go to Japan in order to see that I'm in a cave. Only if you have some kind of inkling that you already—always already—are in a cave, you can get to the fact that you are in a cave. If you are satisfied, then for you it's not the cave, it's the Elysian Fields or something. But if you have a kind of feeling of dissatisfaction, that is not necessarily consciously formulated or conceptualized into philosophical and political systems (although in my case it was, under the impact of fascism, war, and the Yugoslav Revolution), or into a political orientation. But, of course, the political orientation per se, the way we usually conceptualize it in terms of partisan ideologies and so on, doesn't explain a whole range of experiences. Maybe if we knew how to conceptualize politics more intelligently it would, advancing from Gramsci say, but at present I don't think it does.⁵ Yet in this widest sense of politics, if you wish, that is to say the judgment about your living in the macro-community, the civilization you're living in, this type of travel that I'm talking about—let us say *epistemological traveling*, is a sign of dissatisfaction. It's a symptom. Because if you were satisfied I think you would do what the Daoist sages did, which is to sit in front of the temple and meditate

⁵ Note 2010: I should have said advancing from Gramsci and Brecht, see now my work on his key category of *Haltung* (stance or bearing) in several articles, for example, "Haltung (Bearing) and Emotions: Brecht's Refunctioning of Conservative Metaphors for Agency," in T. Jung ed., *Zweifel - Fragen - Vorschläge*. Frankfurt a.M.: Lang V, 1999, 43-58, as well as in chapters 12 and 14 of the present book.

and go nowhere, or, as the medieval rabbis, sit in your study and write books and meditate. There are two ways to interpret those that stayed home and meditated: either they were satisfied, or they weren't but they had no choice, they couldn't go anywhere—like many European rabbis. But the function of the Chinese sages could be more or less fulfilled by sitting and meditating.

TH: By being relaxed in a sense?

DS: Right. When we are agitated, we are looking around. We are much too hysterical, obviously. We do too much traveling in my opinion, although perhaps it's necessary for the reasons we have just discussed. But it would be better if these reasons didn't exist. Given that these reasons exist, the traveling is perfectly okay. So I'm not talking against traveling, I'm talking against what makes the traveling necessary. If it's necessary then you must do it. In other words we live in an age of what Hegel called an unhappy consciousness. And yet to have a happy consciousness instead of an unhappy unconsciousness would today be even worse. There is no going back, once the chicken goes out of the egg you can't put it back in. So that's as much as I can make sense out of.

TH: I was thinking about the new SF, like Neuromancer, and the idea of going into a computer instead of taking a space flight....

DS: Virtual reality?

TH: Yes. Is this traveling in the sense that you are speaking about?

DS: That's a metaphorical traveling but you get inside the metaphor, you are snagged by it. Okay, let us not get into big ontological discussions about cyberspace. To begin with I know little about cyberspace, I know what Gibson & Co. say about it, I have never experienced the three-dimensional, "real," combat-pilot cyberspace—I would like to try it once but no army has volunteered to gear it to me.

TH: You can do this in the streets in London and New York.

DS: Well, I think we would have to disentangle several strands, and I will make it as simple as I can. Number one: I don't know enough about it, so I can only speculate from the outside. Number two: this is a space dominated by armies and corporations, it is not a space of the heart's desire. It's a very ambiguous utopia—that's one of the nicest things in Gibson: his utopia is really dubious. Do you really want to shed your body? No doubt the body can be very cumbersome at times, if you are sick or hungry or weary or cold, but first of all you wouldn't have a mind without a body. If you could take the mind out of the body it would react totally differently. There have been studies about sensory deprivation and so on, not about minds outside the bodies but we may get to it, and there's lots of SF stories about brains in vats and so on. Finally, all our delights are in some way bodily delights; to me thinking

is also a bodily delight, I mean the mind is not outside the body. So I find some very strange aspects in the ideology of virtual reality, I find some strange and disquieting aspects. Traveling that downplays the body is partial, truncated traveling.

Circumstances and Stances: A Retrospect (2004)

You asked me about the “particular cultural and political circumstances in which I write.”¹ They have changed decisively several times in my life. I have been several times an expatriate and finally an émigré from Yugoslavia, and am now an expatriate from Canada: my life has made me very attuned to global material and moral changes. I shall focus on the changes that I personally, being laggard, felt as breaking upon my professional work only in the last 10 years or so, the watershed for me being the illegal and immoral bombing of Serbia led by the United States. By then I had published three books on science fiction: *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction* (1979), *Victorian Science Fiction in the U.K.* (1983), and *Positions and Presuppositions in Science Fiction* (1988)—and written enough further essays for a fourth book, that was scrapped when the Liverpool University Press had its budget cut. The changes make me, alas, the bearer of bad news, for as I see it our rulers have in practice destroyed the wall that our disciplines wrongly thought existed between culture and political economics, and we had better draw the consequences. And yet the gesture and bearing (see Suvin, “Haltung”) of writing this report also imply a hope that (with much clarity, work, and luck) we intellectuals—writers and then critics—can make an important difference.

I. In this world of late aggressive capitalism without a human face, what we are allowed or denied to teach by its politicians and managers, what monies we are given or refused for research, intervenes into our daily lives in unprecedented, capillary ways. A primary factor shaping our situation is the bending of all technological and other cultural innovations to the purposes of capitalism as a totalizing system. Two-thirds of the Gross National Product in the societies of the capitalist North today derive from the mental labour of the new middle classes, whose core is constituted by intellectuals. Richard Ohmann’s classical book about the role of English in America notes, “Knowledge (technical, scientific, managerial) is accountable, not only for the material triumphs of [the capitalist] system, but for the all-encompassing control it has over the

¹ For the Special Issue on Science Fiction, the general editor of *PMLA* asked a number of critics to contribute a brief piece in answer to the question, “How have particular cultural and political circumstances in which you write influenced your work”?

way we live" (273). Through copyright and patent legislation, often through piratical plunder of nonpatented knowledge, mental labor is being more and more subsumed under exploitable property. We live in a "knowledge society": alas, one in which useful knowledge and perniciously fake knowledge are closely intertwined. Knowledge as use-value for living is being evicted by knowledge as exchange-value for profits, with its logical end in "smart bombs" for mass killings.

What, then, is knowledge? And what is the function of us intellectuals as bearers of knowledge? As to the first question: the economic collapse of Fordism and the political collapse of Leninism plus Keynesianism have shaken our epistemology: how come we thought we knew what we knew, when a good part of what we thought we knew beyond a peradventure in (say) 1945-74 has turned out to be inaccurate? Some certainties have become thoroughly uncertain, and I do not see how we can now gauge the correctness of any replacing hypothesis without establishing first a great deal about how do we know what we believe we know, about what is the *bon usage* of knowing and in knowing. There is no way around focusing on some knots within epistemology. I adopt the definition of epistemology as the theory of knowledge, dealing with the possibilities and limits of human knowledge, with the analysis of conceptual and other (e.g., affective) cognitive systems, and in particular with the critique of language and other sign systems as concrete consciousness.

For a starter: any epistemic tool of ours defines equally its object-types and its subject-wielders *as* something and *to (for)* something; its embodied adoption co-defines our access to the world of signifying and significant potential actions. Any understanding intervenes into life to a certain degree—if only by refusing to intervene. In brief, it is imperative that we realize, as the feminists have, that epistemology does not function without our asking the political question "What for?" or "Who for?—For whose benefit?," *cui bono*. Interests and values decisively *shape* all perception: it was Marx's great insight that no theory or method can be understood without connecting it to the practice of social groups putting it into practice. Thus our answers can be found only in feedback with potential action. As Vico argued, whatever we cannot intervene into, we cannot understand: it follows that *the epistemological and the political intertwine*. Those who do not put an explicitly defensible civic cognition at the heart of their professional cognition at best adopt the dominant epistemology of the time when they were students, and at worst adapt their cognition to the new epistemology of the Powers-That-Be.

I cannot here articulate properly an answer to the second question: our deeply contradictory situation as intellectuals, impacted like a split

tooth. I have discussed this elsewhere (“Utopianism,” “Novum,” and “What May”), concluding that we are essential to the production of new knowledge but largely kept out of the strategic decision making about our universities and about dissemination of our artifacts. Therefore, our civic concerns are not something we might hold, as it were, privately: indeed, we can only understand what our professional work may be if we understand how and why it is being shaped by identifiable national and international forces. The age of the Welfare-and-Warfare State saw the culmination of the “cut” from the global surplus we “middle” 10-15% “administrators, technicians, scientists, educators” (Wallerstein 83-84) were getting; and “the shouts of triumph of this ‘middle’ sector over the reduction of their gap with the upper one per cent have masked the realities of the growing gap between them and the other [85-90%]” (ibidem 104-05). This trend is since the 1970s being reversed. The class aggression by big corporations against the immediate producers, corporeal and intellectual, means that Jack London’s dystopian division of workers under the “Iron Heel” into a minority of indispensable Mercenaries and a mass of downtrodden proletarians (updated by Marge Piercy’s SF novel *He, She and It*) has a good chance of being realized. The engineers of material and human resources, the admen and “design” professionals, the new bishops and cardinals of the media clerisy, most lawyers, as well as the teeming swarms of supervisors, are the Post-Fordist “organic” mercenaries.

This reminds me of an apocryphal anecdote: Shklovsky said to Trotsky, “As a literary critic, I’m not interested in war.” Trotsky responded, “But war is interested in you.”

We cannot escape being involved in the politics and economics of knowledge. Like Gulliver on the floating island of Laputa and among the Projectors in Lagado, we see the prostitution of reason used primarily for Power and separated from societal responsibility and economic practicality.

2. What does this sharp change of circumstances mean for me? I have two answers; one is spatial and existential, the other temporal and professional.

First, I chose to retire in 1999 and transferred back to Europe, not only my birthplace but—for all my admiration of many North American achievements and gratitude to Canada—my spiritual home. My move was also a political decision. Not only is it much easier to be a “senior citizen” where there are still chinks in consumer capitalism. It is also that, as Arnold Toynbee remarked half a century ago, “America is today the

leader of a world-wide anti-revolutionary movement in defense of vested interests. She now stands for what Rome stood for. Rome consistently supported the rich against the poor in all foreign communities that fell under her sway..." (92-93). Paradoxically, I have to defend "America" (that is, the USA known from the media and the military) from most of my European intellectual friends, who are thoroughly disgusted at the reigning discourse in it and at the actions the discourse seeks to justify; I try to point out that from Jefferson and Thoreau to the present day the best and strongest critiques of the United States came from inside: in science fiction, some examples are Thomas Disch's forgotten masterpiece 334 (which draws a parallel between the US and the Late Roman Empire), and then the many splendid women writers from Joanna Russ and Ursula K. Le Guin on, and then the great dystopian tradition from the 1940s-50s "new maps of hell" on, and then... and then....

Finally, what do the new world circumstances mean for my work as a critic of SF? Criticism is for me still more of an art than anything else, and prescriptions ill fit a fast evolving art. Thus I may best answer your question how cultural and political circumstances have influenced my work by giving you examples of the shifts I found myself resorting to.²

First, these shifts include not writing only about fiction but also taking on with philological tools, according to one's competence and conscience (both of which can be trained), the Orwellian discourse about war, terrorism, immigrants, and similar issues—exactly what the MLA Delegate Assembly refused to discuss in 2002. This investigation further entails returning to our most kindred ancestral period, to my mind 1917-45, and writing about Benjamin's messianism, Brecht's combative hopes, as well as the role of German academics under Nazism.

Second, when writing about SF and neighbouring genres (such as the burgeoning Fantasy of both the "heroic" and "horror" varieties, overwhelmingly to my mind a bad involution that today dominates SF on the library and bookstore shelves³), I focused on the interaction of fictional scenarios and our pressing concerns. This work should not be taken for sociopolitical or philosophical criticism as extrinsic to literary or formal criticism, but for an epistemological rethinking similar to

² See my titles in Works Cited, especially "Considering," "Goodbye," "Reflections," "Science Fiction Parables," "Theses," and "With Sober, Estranging Eyes." After some hesitation, it finally seemed advantageous to have them identified for those who would want to look some up.

³ Still, I acknowledge there are interesting and significant exceptions, to my mind so far much too little studied, such as the "second Earthsea Trilogy" by Ursula K. Le Guin or the still developing opus of China Miéville; I attempted to enter into a dialogue with the former in "On U. K. Le Guin's."

what the best activist critics (liberals in the 19th Century, socialists and feminists in the 20th) have always done, yet striving for new epistemico-political tools to face new necessities. The tools have to be invented. I tried out one such method in revisiting the first and probably still the best SF dystopia, Evgeniy Zamyatin's *My (We)*, which I like to think mimics the DNA double helix: it braids alternate sections of, on the one hand, how the text looks differently after the fall of the centralized State Leviathan which was its *raison d'être*, and, on the other hand, looking at the new Leviathan of capitalist immiseration and plunder of Russia in order to find out why our eyes have changed since the text first came to fame. The result is certainly preferable to formalism on its own (still the ABC of our wisdom) but possibly too mechanical to claim the status of a model. I attempted something similar in an essay about the discourse of cloning in SF and science ("Science Fiction Parables").

Third, in the discussions of utopianism, I concentrated either on its relation to action or on dystopia, the state we are presently living in and can therefore understand well; furthermore, I strove to differentiate within dystopia between what is and what is not an anti-utopia, that is a piece of antiutopian writing, explicitly designated to refute a literary and political utopian horizon (such as the gaggle of anti-Bellamy novels following on his *Looking Backward*, and similar manifestations from about 1917 on). Fourth, I investigated also within SF analogs to Benjamin, which can be found in many places, such as the later career of Philip K. Dick—its descent into total police-State dystopia (*A Scanner Darkly*) and its attempt to imagine salvation through a complex and in places ironic divine intervention (the VALIS cycle)—or the best SF writer who has to my mind emerged from the 1990s, K.S. Robinson.

Dixi et salvavi animam meam

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Poems of Old Age (1999-2004)

A. You, Giacomo Leopardi

Per Daniele Pieroni

1. Bitter Days

...bitter days

To follow the serene ones we have been given.

How did we get to so perverse an age?

(“SOPRA IL MONUMENTO DI DANTE”)

O Giacomo, sickly brother mine,
Indomitable in your frail body, constantly
Wounded! Never ceasing to look
With eagle eye around you, to aspire, for your woman,
For Italy, for the broken wand of earthly
Domination & salvation:

*Shall our sceptres all lie broken up,
Brought low in the mud, & nobody
Raise the fragments up & unite them
In power?*

(“SOPRA IL MONUMENTO DI DANTE”)

Stone & mud.
Muddy footprints on stony ground.
Rock breaks scissors cuts paper
Paper only wraps rocks
Mud & blood.

2. Can We?

*O could i
In the dismal age, in this nefarious air
Keep the high image!*
(“*ALLA SUA DONNA*”)

O could i
O could we
Can we?
If we do
then we can
But how?

East wind has lost strength. Flowers have withered.
In Spring the silk-worm spins thread. Then he ends.
Then he's put into scalding water. The thread is taken away.

Towards morning candles burn down to wick's ash.
The grey hour is when we die. Tears then dry out.

3. The Enlightened Treats a Poison Arrow

*Abject part
Are we of things, & the bloodied clod
Or hollow caverns resounding with our howls
Are not moved by our ills & wars:
Nor does human disaster discolour the stars.*
(“*BRUTO MINORE*”)

Yes Giacomo: you speak true, looking thru your
Inverted telescope from Voltaire's Sirius or the Andromeda
Nebula. Yet also Karuna and Upeksha are only
Two of the Four Boundless Virtues.* Further
Truths of virtue can be given shape when we look more nearly,
Look from inside the cluster of bodies together,
Conjured up, striven for. Hear now the Enlightened's
Parable of the Poisoned Arrow, *sovrapposta*:

* The Four Bounless virtues (*catvary apramanani*) of Buddhism are: Maitri = friendliness for all; Karuna = Compassion/sorrow for all; Mudita = rejoicing for all; and Upeksha = Detachment from all, including the first three. Tho still properly atheistic, as in Guatama, mine is a rather heretic Buddhism.

“You ask: What is the reason i was hit by the arrow?
 Was it fated or was i accidentally in its way? Are there
 Higher powers that guide the arrow’s flight? Is the universe
 Finite & eternal, so that everything has already happened,

And i have been lying shot already a million times?
 Or is it infinite & contingent?

Permit me to observe

We have no time for such questions now. Whether the universe
 Is finite or infinite, in any case you are here,
 Lying on the jungle floor, poison seeping into you

And your life-blood seeping into the ground. So we must
 Quickly find a healer to pull out the arrow, suck
 The poison, to try and save your life, & also

Identify the evil-doer & break his bow, so that all of us
 Will not get bushwhacked & killed off for good.

After we are all safe, you may ask again

(In the next kalpa).”

4. Identity the Evil-Doer

So then:

*Who disjoined the sword from your hand?
 Who was the traitor? what art or industry
 Or what gigantic power
 Toppled your gracious rule?
 How fell you, or when
 From such heights into a low place?
 Nobody left to fight for you now? nobody
 Of your own to defend your own?*

(“ALL’ITALIA”)

5. *Le Ceneri di Tito (Berlin Day, End of 20th C)*

German winter elder ladies with mink coats
Peroxide hair too much makeup
Lines slashing from both mouth corners down & out
I burrow into sleep quietly on morning islands
At the bottom of the ocean schools of fish
Soft murmur of weary voices
They are bombing Beograd & Novi Sad
No more theatre festivals in springtime
Blood silting up all rivers.

Whispering of fish jealousy of fish
If sharks were men
Big gangsters eat little gangsters
Peasants are burned out of their villages
City people bombed out of their homes
Thousands of Munch faces screaming
Humans from their womb humanity forcibly ripped
By progressive technology & humanism
Demanding oceans of blood

Western brainwashed in uniform shoot at Balkan brainwashed
The center doesn't tolerate too much periphery
Top dollar American mercenaries bomb scared Serbian draftees
Bristly bearded gangsters from Beograd cleaning Albanians out of
 medieval monasteries
They are madly in love with the Serbian destiny to suffer
Smooth shaven gangsters from Washington upgrading armament
 technology
They are madly in love with the profits of arms industries
Booms in Balkan skies booms on the stockmarkets
Communicating slaughterhouse vessels

Oceans of blood oceans of profit
Who is king of the world jungle must be made quite clear
Sharks are not so clever except in fable

Now you can touch what we lost with Tito's brotherhood & unity
Now you see how a people's revolution is eradicated
One million & three quarters dead in the partizan war
A ton of TNT to wipe out every dead partizan

These dead are dangerous they must be killed again by bombs & lies
 Counter-revolution by the center against the periphery
 Blood on stone blood & stones
 Thou shalt not get out from under world banks fish mouth silently
 This is Moses & the prophets

6. Floating Islands

is there peace in this world?
the torture of humans continues
evening light island just floating

shaking like a baby carriage
even archeologists perish in the end .

(Hayashi Fumiko, 1930)

7. Double-Entry Bookkeeping: Both/ And

("BRUTO MINORE")	THE MANIFEST, O! (TAT TVAM ASI)
<i>O conscious future age! The times</i> <i>Turn precipitously nasty, &</i> <i>it won't be</i> <i>This corrupt generation</i> <i>To honour high minds & avenge</i>	Bullets, beatings, starving, organized lies now fetter Each fleshly person; the bourgeois free-for-all-pelf Brings living death. The exploited proletarians of Self Can only get free by forming an alternative, better
 <i>The miserable. The black raven</i> <i>Preens his feathers around me:</i> <i>This trampled body my shame</i> <i>& the winds take my memory &</i> <i>name.</i>	Togetherness: where reason and feeling are not enemy classes But each other's highest, jealousy grasped good: when The art of word-processor program- ming is Zen And Eros the science of ensuring that the current passes

<i>("SOPRA IL MONUMENTO DE DANTE")</i>	
<i>O glorious shade</i>	Between thee and me, an a priori and technology
<i>Tell me: is the love for your cause dead?</i>	Organizing space and time so that we may mesh On hard mattresses with a joyous rightness:
<i>Say: the fire of which you burned, is it spent?</i>	A tightness of fierce feeling twinned beyond apology
<i>Say: the poetic laurel that was ages ago</i>	With structured reason, the twain then lighting up all flesh
<i>A balm to our pain, may it green anew?</i>	And levitating both Selves to one lucid lightness

8. *Horizon*

For on this rock we shall erect
The Church that works from downside up
The Third Age church of Holy Bodies
Both personal & congregational:

See: hunger, killings are not needful
The pie in TV skies deceives
Give us today our daily sweets
Give us down here the sacred hearts & sense.

Return to body its merry pump
Rid of the fat that has enlogged it
The overeating brought by hunger
The ulcers caused by profit slash & burns.

Return to brain its hormonal bath
Disturbed by wolfish enmities
To people & birds & beauteous trees--
When heart & brain work well, we shall be saved.

Drum & inveigle the drowsy people
Send the snake's hiss & roar of lions,
One step in front, ready to die,
This is the sum of art & science.

This is old Karl's dialectics
Of all philosophy it is the Summa.
I've understood it because i've been wronged,
& saw the Revolution one Summer.

11-251200

B. Eleven Poems

(We Shall Behold)

We shall behold our love lie down
Like an evening
In the streets singing with the firefly's shine

& when bells suddenly ring
It shall be
A different morning.

But why do i sleep badly?
6400

(Come Back, Come Back, Beautiful Instant)

Come back, come back, beautiful instant
Young woman, touch me again
On this devouring day.

O linger please, thou wert so fair...
O shining memory, sit down for a while
Before that trackless night
When i shall be a godlet, innocent
& deaf, in thoughtless frolic
Amid the arid waves of death.

6400

Ex: Fudô 2000

To Predrag M.

Headnote: Fudô = esoteric Buddhist godhead of wrath, irate aspect of Enlightenment: blue-black face appearing amid flames, sword in one hand & rope in other hand to cut off & bind evil passions. (Please observe the deviant stresses on the i's.)

What poems, mind of mine, may you now sing
 When corrupt desire rules the ex-communists
 When massy murder, brainwash & whoring enlists—
 Few are saved—their lust for easeful things?

What hopes may now be found to grow new wings?
 We in our youth, emerged from bloody mists,
 Saw Fudô's sword in hands of antifascists
 And the people's rule a real thing,

Wrathful & kind.

Now i let my country go,
 Murderously after false gods a-whore.
 When surgical verse cuts deep it is to know,
 To find at understanding's furthest shore
 Why poison invades the brain's every pore.
 Yet every poem encodes: I loved you so!

30500

Eleven Departures from Heine

[Headnote: This series of poems came about in part because I was reading Heine. But I cannot give all responsibility to old Henri: I redid his stimuli, in places wildly, for the year 2000. My logic was: if Henri had added to his presuppositions & inclinations also my experiences & a bit of my temperament etc., he might have written these poems in 2000. I fear he'd have written much better ones.]

1.

Do not tell me we may love,
 I know such beginnings:
 The same Moon went on above
 Branches rustled thinly.

But the heartbeats in our cleaving
 Slowed down under the Moon:
 Branches never cease releasing--
 Of us, one stops sooner.

2.

In the forest in the gloaming
 I was given a strange vision
 The Queen of Fairies was a-roaming
 Clearly seen, without misprision.

Round & round me her train went
 And she turned & flashed a smile
 Tell me, O Queen, what this meant
 Spare me, Mab, the miss a mile.

Did you stage it for my learning?
 To reward my fealty?
 Does it mean a love returning?
 Does it mean the death of me?

3.

Red-eyed bloody business weather!
 One-eyed profit-ordered town!

How i wonder when--not whether--
Earthquakes rise to break you down.

6.

Ghostly kissing, ghostly loving
Ghostly living, by & by:
Did you think, romantic person,
Love will last eternally?

True, our bodies held each other,
& their feelings truly soared:
As true is the wheel of nature,
Too quickly we soar no more.

For the brains they grow forgetful
& the heavy eyelids close:
Memory may keep some echo,
At the end, it also goes.

7.

How shamefully you treated me
I hid from human sight,
I rowed far out into the sea
& told the fish at night.

On all six continents i leave
A-standing your good name;
In oceans there is no reprieve,
Full well they know your shame.

9.

A weirdly formed rock juts on the coast
I sit there & think of my dreams.
Waves roll, winds whistle, & a noisome host
Of raptor seagulls screams.

I've loved many a beauteous doll:
They & my visions, all lost.
Where have they gone? The waves they roll,
Warlike there wanders a ghost.

10.

When i kiss her mouth i close my eyes
Between my hands i take her face,
Now day & night she asks me why
Her queries are tatted lace.

I do not tell the reason why
I do not know myself the reason,
I kiss her mouth & close my eyes--
No doubt, another season.

11.

When we lie together in post-coital bliss
Don't ask me about ex-Yugoslavia, how grand it
Was, how come it got pushed so bloodily amiss:
There are good reasons--i cannot stand it.

I beg you, leave Yugoslavia in peace
Don't mention world banks--NATO--elites--bandits
Don't call up traitors or errors, just give me a kiss:
There are good reasons--i cannot stand it.

One i loved in those bygone, far-off, beautiful days
Now calls it „Serbo-bolshévik“, our youth's season,
& sighs for more civilized (European) ways:
I cannot stand it--there are good reasons.

12.

Of course you are my top ideal
I've told you so a thousand times
With oaths & poems, meant for real,
But now i'm busy--come another time.

Come please tomorrow at the hour of three
I shall expect you at the wicket.
& after dinner we'll go to see
A movie; or I'll get reviewers' tickets

To Brecht's play *Mother*: the story tells
Of a mother & son, & how they may cling
Together despite all prison cells--
They both grow devoted to a Third Thing.

13.

Don't let me go, even if your thirst
Has been quenched by too much drink,
Keep me another year or so
Then i too will stop, i think.

But when we cease sleeping together
Let's not forget what are friends,
Having gone thru love's volcanic labours
Let's find a friendly end.

14.

We sat in the pizza parlour
& debated alienation
We went to dinner many times
Deploring globalization.

The little god of the right moment
A putto naked & shameless
Came by & saw us sitting there
Laughed & flew on, blameless.

156-700

*In the Ruins of Leningrad: A Medieval Allegory**

Counterproject to Elder Olson's
 "In the Ruins of Macchu Picchu"

What Hope had built, cruel Greed has spilled
 — Witness the city of Ilyich & Peter--
 But what Greed's unbuilt, Hope can rebuild.

Where are the mountains of starving & killed?
 The dead of Yudenich, Yagoda & Hitler?
 What Hope had built, cruel Greed has spilled.

The hunger for Justice walks forth unstilled
 The hunger for bread makes Her still sweeter
 Greed's power unbuilds, Hope can rebuild.

Between Greed & Justice, what grain will be milled?
 The outcome's uncertain, balances teeter:
 What Hope had built, cruel Greed has spilled.

When Winter has stricken flesh to the hilt
 Struck flesh will strive to unseat her
 Greed cruelly kills but Hope can rebuild.

A counterpower can also be willed
 To Death Love beats a countermeter
 What Hope had built, cruel Greed has spilled.
 A sterile mule is Greed: Hope can rebuild.

* Or Beograd, or Sarajevo, or...

The Scribe Has a Vision

So here we are amidst a burst of irises and peonies,
 Inside the rainbow nobody has ever seen, looking
 For how to manage this all in words that suggest
 All other senses too.

Boy or girl, do not forget senses traffic through sense,
 With truth. And truth shall make you free.

1402

Reading The Secret Treasury [Hizôhâyaku]

The deranged in command of armies do not know they're mad
 Blind people leading the nations do not see their blindness
 Reproduced by deep class interests, they're in the dark all their lives
 Dying time and time again, they take revenge in killing others
 At the end of their deaths they've forgotten there was light.

8402

Rome 2004: Homage to Nazim Hikmet's Poems on Death

What is to come will come unannounced
 A solitary thief, all alone, on the third floor
 & you'll walk up three flights without ringing for me
 & maybe start keeping a dog in your old age
 To be faithful, looking up at you, head on his paws,

While Spring with naked feet scatters her flowers
 The Graces dance regardless of any sadness, & you look
 Too long at the tinted photos beginning to fade.

25404, Festa della Liberazione

3.

Happy is the one who understood early on
 The gods give us only an eye-blink together
 This now this here this moment we may call
 History in which something of one
 May live on in other flesh or stone, or
 Die utterly, born in vain.

For when strident strife rules, the one who sees is
 Only a singleton human, owl hooting in vain
 From up on the beam.

Witless it was
 Not to foresee.

4.

Tykhe, destiny-bearing daughter of ever-rolling Ocean,
 Narrow the path, pitiless the need,
 Heart-breaking the waste, Yugoslavia gone the way of Atlantis,
 Shining moment, tolerant cradle of many tongues,
 Where Law was a-building, and Justice had a chance,
 And Peace ruled, three sisters nourished at the same breast,

All swallowed by the gargantuan throat of Greed. Did i
 Do what i could? Certainly not, almost none of us. Unexpected,
 The cloud of oblivion arose. Maya
 Beguiled us, tender and unfailingly cruel, the easy
 Life, whispering the voice of falsity, weaving
 Bewilderment, forgetfulness of bloody history, foolish stepdaughter
 Of sweet-gifting Mother, Shakti Venus.

5.

For when combats are not loving and giving
 When they turn hating and taking, perverse and sterile
 (Say heaping money on cruel money),
 Better to have been a bird
 Who wings it on the flower of the wave, meets the halcyons
 From the heart, kingfishers who catch fire
 A holy bird purple-coloured as the sea
 Wounding itself but no others...

Yet how dare one say “fly away like a bird”, blind to misery,
Stupefied, unaware,
When the corrupt aim their bank-loans down the alleys of the night
To shoot the humble, the confused, the upright,
And have destroyed most of what was good:
Brotherhood and Comradeship, gone with the hurricane
In merciless mercification. Flaming coals are coming, the inevitable
Terrible whirlwind they sow and we all reap.

Soon, soon after this life the Islands of the Blessed
From whom the gods keep insoluble worries. There, there,
Honey-voiced may approve of me the sister Muses.

21804

The Final Chapter of SF?: On Reading Brian Stableford (2000)

I. The redoubtable Brian Stableford has given us in *Foundation* no. 79 (2000) much food for thought about the “shifts of fortune” befalling SF in the last quarter century. I wish to reflect here on his data and conclusions (mainly on pp. 49-55) about the future of SF, especially as facing the invasion of Heroic and Horror Fantasy aimed at the core of its earlier readership. Since I’ve been for somewhat similar reasons engaging in a discussion of that invasion, just published in *Extrapolation*,¹ I’d like to build on that essay, reusing some data and arguments from it by adding them to Stableford’s ones and then somewhat varying his gloomy conclusion.

Stableford tells an amazing story, with major consequences for our understanding of SF. In my words, it would be that Fantasy (in the 20th Century a literary genre or group of genres whose audience and characteristics are in a close though confusing — multiple, unclear, love-hate, complementary, contradictory — relation with SF) has advanced from “a parasite on its more popular cousin, science fiction” (Scholes 12-13) to an undoubted commercial — and I’d add ideological — victor over SF. As David Hartwell encapsulated this: “In the latter half of the twentieth century, with certain best-selling exceptions, fantasy is produced by writers of science fiction and fantasy, edited by editors of science fiction, illustrated by SF and fantasy artists, read by omnivore fantasy and SF addicts who support the market. Fantasy is not SF but part of the phenomenon that confronts us” (20). The huge quantitative burgeoning of Fantasy began in the late 1960s, when Tolkien’s term of “Fantasy” also came to the fore. Significantly, since the mid-70s this burgeoning is accompanied by a growing quantitative stagnation of SF (see Hartwell 185-92) and certainly also a qualitative stagnation of its bulk.

¹ I’d have no means of discussing Stableford without the essay “Considering,” which was developed from a lecture for the conference “Orizzonti del fantastico” in Procida and a presentation on “Problems in the Theory of Fantasy Fiction” at Università di Roma III, both in Oct. 1999. My attendance at these two invitations was rendered possible by the assistance of the Dept. of Foreign Trade and International Affairs of Canada. I owe thanks for further arguments to Matt Beaumont and K.S. Robinson.

In order not to augment the confusion of tongues, I shall accept the probably unfortunate term “Fantasy.” One of its problems is that it almost inextricably stands for three corpses of different historical scope: 1) the post-Tolkien corpus of “heroic”

In 1987, the most knowledgeable John Clute estimated that, if one eliminates reprints and anthologies, out of 650 novels published in USA as “fantastic literature” 298 are SF and 352 “fantasy and horror novels” (he endearingly adds: “For this writer, bad sf can be seen as a category of trash, and can be junked at sight. Bad fantasy ... is *junk-food*, an addictive mockery of the true meal, which sticks to the stomach, and eats it.” — 18). The data we all use stem from the year-end breakdown of publications in the *Locus* magazine, which I find not wholly reliable as they put into SF a number of titles that are to my mind partly or wholly Fantasy. Even so, Clute estimates that in their 1992 data, the total of new novels is: 308 SF, 275 Fantasy, 165 Horror (e-mail communication to me of 30/1/2000). Since I’ve argued at length that Fantasy comprises both Heroic and Horror tales, we have a proportion of 440 titles of what I’d call Fantasy vs. 308 SF. And the equally knowledgeable Stableford concluded from the sharp drop of SF titles in the 1990s (down 1/3 from 1991 to 1994!), and from the fact that by 1994 the ratio in new novels was 204 SF vs. 234 “Fantasy” plus 178 /! “Horror,” that SF—which I believe has a better chance of cognitive approaches to history—“will soon be the least produc[ed] of the three genres...” (49). A glance into any bookstore teaches that this decennial trajectory, which had by 1994 arrived at a 2:1 preponderance of Fantasy, is continuing and solidifying. Furthermore, the economically and for consumer-psychology important bestsellers were by far drawn more from Fantasy than from SF. Indeed, Stableford went on to gloomy speculations that perhaps habitual SF readers have always had much in common with Fantasy readers, since the two genres as it were have a common denominator in “futuristic adventure stories which were essentially exercises in costume drama” and which always constituted a solid majority of SF (51-52). These facts delineate a whole different lay of the land for SF too, so even those critics much less interested and still quite dubious about dominant trends in Fantasy (like me) cannot treat it as not pertinent to our concerns. Stableford concludes: “The summation of all these trends implies that the more earnest and thoughtful kinds of science fiction are in danger of being removed altogether from the commercial arena” (55).

I think this makes it mandatory to look more closely at Fantasy, which obviously fulfills at some level (that may not be the healthiest one) widespread reader interests. Thus before proposing my variant on

plus “horror” fantasy; 2) the Morris-to-just-after-Tolkien corpus of what may by now be called “classical” Fantasy, up to say the mid-1970s; and 3) the tradition that can be retrospectively identified as having shaped these corpuses, beginning in Gothic novels and German Romantics and continuing in a phase of inserting the fantastic Novum into realistic surroundings after 1830-40 (Gogol, Poe, Hawthorne, etc.).

Stableford's doom prospect for worthwhile SF, I'll branch out a bit into these interests and their causes.

2. Patrick Parrinder wrote in 1982 a brief essay, "The Age of Fantasy," in which he, among other points, proposed to link Fantasy strategically with desire; and already Tolkien had recognized that Fantasy stories "were plainly not primarily concerned with possibility, but with desirability" (40). What desires were responsible for Tolkien, Conan, and Co. having encountered such favourable ground in the US and then European counter-culture of the 1960s? A very brief answer would be that at that point a revolt had spread in depth and breadth against a stifling military-cum-bureaucratic Establishment, whose main institutionalized ideology was (and with suitable changes still is) technoscientific rationality subservient to profit-making. Possibly the best depth diagnosis of it was given by the prescient Karl Marx who in the mid-19th Century pinpointed the central building block of the alienated mega-oppressive apparatuses of capitalist industry and organization of life (market intertwined with State), in general overview as well as in its central cell, the industrial shop-floor:

The worker's activity [the use-value, i.e., the material quality of production by labour], reduced to a mere abstraction, is determined and regulated on all sides by the movement of the machinery, and not the opposite. The science which compels the inanimate limbs of the machinery to act purposefully, by its construction, like an automaton, that science does not exist in the worker's consciousness but rather acts upon him through the machine as an alien power, as the power of the machine itself. Living labour [is appropriated] by the objectified labour inherent in the concept of capital. (*Grundrisse* 692-93, transl. modified)

The worker becomes "a mere living accessory" of the machinery, which includes the bureaucratic private and public apparatuses, measured against which any personal "value-creating power ... is an infinitesimal, vanishing magnitude," and which "destroys every connection of the product with the direct need of the producer" (693-94). The domination over Nature by technoscientific apparatuses is consubstantial with their domination over the producers or creators: "The right of property originally appeared to be based on one's own labour. Property now appears as the right to alien labour, and as the impossibility of labour appropriating its own product" (458). Machinery (fixed capital) is objectified past labour, now dead, that zombie-like seizes the living: a demonic possession.

Thus, for all the mealy-mouthed celebrations of reason, in the practice that determined the life of a huge majority, rationality decayed from the Enlightenment hopes and split into two opposed modes. What was reasonable and perfectly functional in terms of personal and sensual goals for individuals and large classes of people (self-determination, shorter working time, psychophysical use-values) became irrational to the ends of the ruling apparatuses; while vice versa, the apparatus reasoning of capitalist power and technoscience perfectly meshed with the military-bureaucratic complex (cf. Gorz 53 and *passim*). The rationality claimed by this complex is in fact an impoverished pseudo-rationality: for example, a huge quantitative and functional improvement of means for genocide and ecocide. This could not but give reason a bad name. The immense potentialities of science and technology for making people's lives easier are themselves as alienated as the people affected by them. In war, the condensation of everyday politics by other means—and there were over 30 wars in 1999 alone!—dehumanized humanity looks through the media “at its own annihilation as an esthetic pleasure of the first order” (Benjamin I: 508). It is scarcely surprising, even if not healthy, that some strata of the population began to place their hopes in all kinds of occult sciences, magic or a return to reactionarily refunctioned religious beliefs, flying from alienated reason to unfalsifiable doctrine. As dogmas go, the Invisible Hand of the Free Market making for universal contentment was no better than being washed in the Blood of the Lamb, the UFOs or whatever Maharishi was around.

In particular, sad to say, technoscientific culture as developed in, by, and for capitalism is as a rule—however individual scientists may diverge—non-culture in relation to all that is not technoscientific: not merely arts, but all non-violent and sensual activities. Post-Modernist cultists often claim that the new “clean” techniques of the computer have changed all that. Well, they certainly have not changed the horrible exploitation of the young Chinese or Malayan women producing microchips. Have they changed the life of us users? We could have a discussion about the effect on intellectuals such as myself: I think the jury is still out on that, though it is already clear that the computer and the Web have deepened the chasm between global North and South, and that a great majority of computers is used for the tsunamis of global financial speculation. On the industrial shop floor, computerization has made plant operation much less transparent to the workers, whose erstwhile skills have largely been frozen onto the software instructing the machines, which they do not understand. The abstracting or “ephemerization” of work is even clearer in the “service” sectors and offices, where “the product itself is abstract” (Chapman 307). In sum,

technologies without self-management “have boxed far more people into a life of artificial, animated stupefaction. To these people ... [l]ife becomes a kind of phantasmagoria of ... technological features” (idem 308). Technoscientific culture subservient to the profit principle necessarily disregards the cost to the environment and to the degradation of human senses (such as the hearing faculty subjected to bellowing amps). True, for a privileged mercenary minority in the field of, say, molecular genetics or informatics, “[f]etishism has never been more fun, as undead substitutes and surrogates proliferate.... Ask any biodiversity lawyer whether genes are sources of ‘value’ these days, and the sources of commodity fetishism will come clear” (Haraway 134). But treating workers or employees as means to a misnamed “productive” end, as mere exploitable labour-power, is a repression of the subalterns’ as well as of the masters’ sense and sensitivity (see Braverman, cited at length in Suvin “On the Horizons,” 18-20). Beside the workplace, this is evident in our housing, urbanism, noise, pollution, lighting, materials, and other matters over which the ordinary citizen has no control, including most education. Marx’s diagnosis has been confirmed in spades.

The culture of ruling institutionalized violence in feedback with technoscience is thus, deep down, a barbaric culture. In such circumstances, which dominate most people since the Industrial Revolution, life outside work (“leisure”) becomes the opposite of and compensation for life at work. How can we from this vantage point view the delight in Howard’s—and Schwarzenegger’s—Conan and similar less brawny heroes? As a complex mixture of ideology and utopia, I’d suggest: on the one hand a condensed reproduction and reaffirmation of cruelties from the readers’ alienated reality, and on the other a compensatory glimpse of use-value qualities which that reality lacked. The Heroic Fantasy stories have at least the merit of, first, showing this openly; second, marrying it to individual initiative and sensuality; and third, holding at arm’s length the particular causal nexus of the violence around the reader or moviegoer which has made the simplified circumstances of Iron Age life seem less alienating. This does not cancel out their overall stultifying, sometimes frankly semi-fascist, horizons.

3. The common denominator of Fantasy seems to me the resolute refusal of any technology, urbanization, and finances associated with the capitalism of Industrial Revolution and “paleotechnic” (Mumford) machinery, as well as the refusal of the opacity and sheer loss of synoptic overview which follow for all efforts to understand relationships between

people. The most useful definition I could find for works that I'd call Fantasy is *ahistorical alternative worlds*. This is consubstantial to a full evacuation of both the constraints and of the object world of late capitalism. Carried over from the everyday pressures are, I think, three factors, which follow in ascending order of shape-shifting in relation to the reader's empirical world.

First is the omnipresent hugely *endangered status* of life and liberty, stemming from our global avalanches of unemployment, hunger, epidemics, wars...

Second, the place of any overarching historical laws, whether of bourgeois "progress" or of socialist sublation of capitalism that retains the achievements of industrialism, is taken by *power politics*; even the nostalgic collectivists of the Tolkien kind cannot show a monotheistic religion or Saviour. Heroic Fantasy and Horror Fantasy divide according to whether personal salvation through the action of saviour-heroes is on the agenda or not. If it is, the reader's alienation is countered by the attempt to wipe the historical slate clean and try the pursuit of happiness in a rougher but more understandable environment, the landscapes and cities using 18th-Century Arabian Tales or similarly filtered legends of "harder" primitivism, and often intermingled with power from polytheistic godheads and wizardry. If it is not, the power politics are transmuted into the intervention of immeasurably superior crushing godheads or entities into everyday spacetime, which yokes the reader's alienation into the pleasure of aesthetized horror. In a further ideational compromise characteristic for our history of scaled-down hopes, parts of Heroic Fantasy may also be seen as shelving the very thought of salvation in favour of little oases of privatized survival, either still against the backdrop of a whole age (*Conan*) or simply in the interstices of a city (Leiber).

Third, and for this initial hypothesis final, the most keenly felt disenchantment (Weber) or loss of aura (Benjamin) pervading all aspects of capitalist hegemony, is replaced by *new thrills or affects*. Even Lovecraftian horror maps a kind of demented causality that is more bearable than the isolation, fragmentedness, and alienation imposed by bureaucratized rationality yoked to the profit principle—and even more so the re-enchantments of Dunsany, Tolkien, and their followers.

Let me try to prevent misunderstanding: As against the Puritanical or business barbarians' discomfort with or even hate of truly new stories, there is in principle or in theory no reason to shy away from any alternative worlds. My shortcut in *Metamorphoses* to reject Fantasy as a genre, though meant only for horror fantasy, has proved overhasty. But I believe there are two crucial and consubstantial preconditions

if any such world depiction is to be useful beyond airport reading to anesthetize unbearable environments: 1) that the actions and agents in this world be radically different, instead of a simple translation of (say) our empirical gang or workplace brutality to wishful heroism; and 2) that the story in its own way throw a light on the relationships of people around the reader to each other and to their institutions, and thus permit a better orientation within them and an intervention into them. This applies to my mind equally to Fantasy and SF. Now the practical subset of what seems to be the great majority of existing Heroic and Horror Fantasy is alien to such horizons. One might excuse this by saying the proportions may not be much worse than in actually existing SF. I don't know whether this is correct, for one would have to read a good portion of the 600 new titles per year to know it; but even if it were, this would be a hollow excuse.

4. On the basis of these arguments, I can now return to Stableford's properly sociological concerns. There is no doubt that the sociological bearer of Fantasy is a large group of alienated readers at the margins of the Post-Fordist social hegemony, drawn from the marginalized intellectuals, the young, the lower classes, and women, and that a good part of them would be Benjamin's narcotized dreamers escaping its pain. Hugh Duncan exemplified this for the USA in the 1960s as follows: "[t]he American Negro, the poor [W]hite, the impecunious adolescent, are urged daily and hourly, by some of the most persuasive magicians known to history, to want everything that money can buy, yet because they are black, unskilled, or too young, they cannot satisfy those exhortations ... they must repress [their] desires" (in Elkins 25-26, and cf. Russ 61). But how are we to update this for the last quarter of the 20th century?

My "sociological" hypothesis is this: The long-range structural crisis of capitalism coincides with the mass growth of fantastic fiction in and at the end of the high modernist phase, in direct parallel to the widening of its readership from the Poe-to-Morris disaffected intellectuals into a mass appeal to marginalized social groups. In particular, this includes a large segment of the young generation whom the collapse of the Welfare State and all other organized opposition to savage capitalism has left without economic and ideological anchorage. The hugely encroaching commodification of everything means that when work is obtained, it is very rarely related to pleasure any more. Subjectivity, bereft of most private oases (work, family) which used to alleviate subjection and marginalization, is now sold like Peter Schlemihl's shadow. This results in a huge rise of everyday humiliations in shamelessly exploited

labour buttressed by sexism and racism—up to scores of extremely dirty wars that openly institute global surveillance and reduce people to data murdering or being murdered, but carefully occult the motives. One resentful response is then hugely swelling yearning for a world where goods are not commodities and people are not alienated by the omnipervasive machinery of bourgeois war of each against each, or at least where the reader's representative is top dog. In them, the sympathetic heroes are often pirates or thieves or average people faced with with inexplicable opportunities or resentfully yoked to overwhelming horrors. To the empirical world out of joint there are opposed inverse worlds "in joint," though as a rule in a simplified joint (plaster cast?).

Building on Gérard Klein, I'd think SF appeals to social groups with confidence that something can at present be done about a collective historical future—if only as dire warnings. This entails as a rule (Morris was representative of possibilities of exception) a comfortable neighbourliness toward, and mostly actual alliance with or indeed commitment to technoscience. To the contrary, in a situation where people's entire life-world has in the meanwhile undergone much further tentacular and capillary colonization, Fantasy's appeal is to uncertain social classes or fractions who have been cast adrift and lost that confidence, so that they face their own present and future with horror or a resolve to have a good time before the Deluge—or both. There seems to be wide agreement among editors and writers, based on polls, that Fantasy is read predominantly by younger people, perhaps up to their mid-30s and 70% male (Kelso 440 and 445), who have internalized the experience of lacking safe and permanent employment. A number of them are university graduates (as in SF), but in Post-Fordism this no longer ensures entry into the professional-managerial class; and a number seem to be already the de-schooled generation, with markedly inferior education. Therefore the epistemology of SF can appeal to the cognitive universalism of natural and/or social laws, however renewed, while an individualistic and pluralist epistemology of Fantasy appeals to occultism, whimsy or magic, opposing the SF model while leaning on it. Simultaneously with the symptomatic interest of anthropology for what Lévi-Strauss called "societies without history," that is a short-circuiting of myth and mind outside of history, the young people of the urban middle classes, mostly employees and university educated, rejected the accepted (or any) cause-and-effect relations (Ben-Yehuda 75-77, 85).

Both Klein and Ben-Yehuda note how exactly parallel in time and largely overlapping in horizons are the rise of occultism and the new developments in what is by now all lumped together into the

mystifying category of “speculative fiction”: SF in the wake of *Dune*, and all Fantasy. Though everybody from Klein and Clute to Kelso and Stableford lacks hard data (and what there is ends in the mid-1990s), it is clear Ben-Yehuda is correct when he cites as enabling conditions for this, first, the decomposition of the political horizons of the 60s’ counter-culture (or any other oppositional mass politics) and the privatization of organizing belief, and second, the tremendous loss of prestige by technoscience because of wars and ecological disasters (87-88, 98-102). It is not by chance that Freud’s hypothesis of an unconscious out of time was published in 1915, while an entire generation was being slaughtered in the horrible stasis of the World War I trenches.

In these straits, SF has to my mind apparently three but in fact only two sustainable options. The first option is to continue with what Stableford calls “futuristic costume dramas” or space-operas, erasing more and more their difference from Fantasy as to any rational credibility or causality involved; the best writer of this option—which can now claim the dubious cachet of a Post-Modern sensibility—is surely, as of *Dhalgren*, Samuel Delany. The second option is to defiantly embrace the NASA use of hard sciences as the only rightful claim to SCIENCE Fiction—let me call it the Ben Bova school (Benford etc.). This is going to become not perhaps commercially extinct, as Stableford prophesies (or fears), but the fiction of those engineering and science students who still read fiction—a dwindling group. For the genre as a whole, it is no option.

The third option—the only one to hold some hopes for the flourishing of that thoughtful SF whose demise is seen by Stableford—is what I’d, lacking a proper name, tentatively call the U.K. Le Guin to K.S. Robinson line. Whatever its present overt politics, this rich and diversified line must be called a Leftwing one insofar as it has inherited from European philosophy and the Welfare State age (from Lenin to Keynes) a commitment to the use of warm reason to at least illuminate why people live so badly together, and perhaps to think about radical changes in the way they live—possibly by ludically skewed contraries (for example Ian Banks). In practice, this means today enmity to the new US-cum-WTO/IMF supremacy. I would prominently include here all thoughtful and self-critical feminist SF from early Russ through Suzy McKee Charnas, Le Guin, and Pamela Sargent to C.J. Cherryh and Gwyneth Jones. In sum: either SF will become integrally critical, or it will eventually be outflanked by Fantasy and fail as a mass genre.²

² It would probably be very instructive to examine why SF has disappeared from the ex-USSR and GDR after capitalist “democratization,” which also meant impoverishment.

If this is so, it would behoove us to think what does an integral or radical critique today mean—that is, *how* is such an SF written. Certainly not only as overt utopian horizons: satire, dystopia, and other anamorphic deformations will in fact do much better. The available modes can only be got at by feedback from the best writings. But I suspect it will have to include demystifications of unjust power and of brainwashing hypocrisies.

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Access to an Identification of “Terrorism”: Words and Actions

[Note: This article was written in Winter 2001/02 and only slightly added to later, so it does not incorporate the results and consequences of the Second Gulf or Iraqi War, nor the later interventions in Afghanistan and elsewhere.]

...neque hi... ueritatem querunt, sed pugnam.
[Neither are they after truth but after a fight.]
Petrus Abaelardus, *Theologia “summi boni”*

What will we do now that the barbarians are gone?
Those people were a kind of solution.
Konstantin Cavafy, *Waiting for the Barbarians*

[As in Orwell’s *1984*, the] “war on terrorism” is terrorism.
John Pilger, *The New Rulers of the World*

While millions of words, bytes, and airwave hours talk about terrorism, and the powerful are acting in the name of combating it, it is a word and concept used almost universally to whip up polluted emotions in order to spread polluted reasoning. Nonetheless, it is not possible to simply deny this term, tempting as this may be. It is not only practically unavoidable but my hypothesis is that there is a useful kernel to it. Furthermore, denying the word might be associated with denying, in the vein of Baudrillard, the existence of acts it is designed to point at. To the contrary, such acts are a product of what one might call “really existing globalization,” and there are strong chances they won’t go away before such globalization goes away. Modifying Lévi-Strauss, we might see it as the asymmetrical obverse of globalization.

Amid such systematic obfuscation, I wish to recall Dorothy Dinnerstein’s great confession of faith: “... we must try to understand what is threatening to kill us off as fully and clearly as we can.... And ... to fight what seems about to destroy everything earthly that you love—to fight it ... intelligently, armed with your central resource, which is passionate curiosity—is for me the human way to live until you die” (viii). I shall be unable here to go, as she did, into the murky psychic depths of what drives the lust to power, profit, and killing. These are initial notes of one who would accept Nietzsche’s wish to have his gravestone say “a philologist.”

1. What Is Terror?

The English word comes from the Latin root *terrēre*, meaning “to frighten,” and the nominal root *terror* (probably mediated through French, thence the early spelling “terroure”). Its meanings are glossed in the *OED* as: 1. *intense fear, fright or dread*; with an adjective, or in the form “a terror” or “terrors,” it was used for an instance thereof. The *Geneva Bible* of 1560 translates *Psalms* lv.4 as “The terrors of death are fallen upon me,” and it was often used with portentous, supernatural events such as the death of Christ or the irruption of Pan. This provides a bridge to the second main meaning: 2. “*The action or quality of causing [such] dread*”; “*terribleness*”; and “*a thing or person that excites terror*,” as in Addison’s “The Messiah appears cloathed with so much terrour and majesty” (1712).

Such fossile remnants in English point to the strong argument that at the basis of many, perhaps all religions lies in what the Old Testament (Torah) calls *emot Jahveh*, the uncanny “God-dread” or “terror consubstantial with God,” and the Greek tradition calls *dēma panikón* (“panic terror”). Faith begins with terror, it seems. Rudolf Otto, who dug this tradition up, glosses it as a combination of unutterable terror with ensnaring fascination, a numbing and paralyzing surprise that simultaneously also attracts. That terrible force engenders in people attempts at propitiating and domesticating it by means of either magical participation or of religious devotion, conjuration, and consecration (13-16, 32, 42-43, and see the comment in Türcke 135-37). This can easily be found also in non-religious events of both wide and profound impact, so that Yeats glosses the Easter 1916 Irish insurrection and attempt at revolution as “a terrible beauty.” As in his eponymous poem, “All, all is changed utterly”: such events portend an utter annihilation of all known orientations, akin to Death, which was called “king of terrors,” as in the 1611 *Bible*: “His confidence... shall bring him to the king of terrours” (*Job* lviii.14).

Instead of divine and supernal, with the waning of religious feeling terror grew lay and/or democratic, potentially lurking everywhere. Already in Juvenal’s railings against popular religion, one can find a Stoic refusal of death’s terrors (Satire X: 357, *mortis terrore carentem*). Toward the end of the 18th century, terribleness and induction of extreme dread becomes the staple of a whole range of prose fiction, called tales of terror, well represented by the *OED* quote from Godwin’s *Caleb Williams*: “The terrors with which I was seized ... were extreme” (1794). Arguably it is such novels, with their insistence on death as lustful carnage and rape of the body, that prepared a double conversion of the

divine and supernatural connotation of "terror": first, into an inimical and evil connotation, laicized but suffused with a satanic numinosity; second, into an action that was no longer the exclusive property of the superiors (divinities, rulers, generals—see *Dictionnaire ... 1835*) but could be exercised by marginal individuals too. Thus, already in 1788 Gibbon could write: "The ferocious Bedoweens, the terror of the desert." It is quite characteristic that this first negative use was applied to warlike non-European barbarians within a discussion of "the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire"!

The British "Gothic novels" (but their fashion spread throughout Europe) thus gave their safe readers a homeopathic dose of the evil connotation of "terror," usually located in feudal Catholic venues far in space and/or time. This delicious fright ceased when it was transferred to the political arch-bugbears of conservative England, the Jacobins in the French Revolution whose months in power (ca. March 1793 to July 1794) were dubbed "the Reign of Terror," "the Terror" or indeed "the Red Terror," and later popularized by a whole range of melodramatic fiction, from Dickens to D'Orczy (the "White Terror" of the Royalists against the revolutionaries in 1794-96 was *not* popularized). Thence the term of (capitalized) Terror, as a rule provided with an adjective identifying the evil enemy, was applied to all armed suppression of internal enemies in a revolution, especially one with anti-bourgeois leanings, such as the Red Terror and the White Terror in the Paris Commune of 1871. This became a staple argument and then cliché of newspaper and other propaganda in the UK and USA at the time of the Bolshevik revolution of 1917 and the ensuing civil war in Russia, including the White Terror after the putdown of revolutions and uprisings of the time in Berlin, Bavaria or Hungary at the same time. It can be seen in the primly shrill *OED* definition of the Jacobine Terror as "the period ... when the ruling faction remorselessly shed the blood of persons of both sexes and of all ages and conditions whom they regarded as obnoxious."

The derived word "terrorism" comes from the French. It was there a neologism of the 1790s, alongside of *terroriste* and *terroriser* (*Dictionnaire ... 1798*, Partridge 708), but it was immediately picked up in England as indicating the policy of systematic intimidation by the government of revolutionary France. This became seamlessly transferrable to any policy intended to strike the victims with terror or strong dread. Two remarkable arguments from such debates, the questions about *the reasons for* and *the indiscriminate governmental abuse of* the term "terrorism," echo down to our days. The favourite English charge of terrorism, after French Jacobins, was to Irish insurgencies; from the Irish side, the following was recorded by the writer Brendan Behan:

“He said it was the fault of the British boss class that the Irish were forced always into terrorism to get their demands” (*Borstal Boy* 1958). And applied to Mandela’s ANC: “The Minister [of the South African apartheid government] cannot expect journalists to do violence to the English language by describing guerrilla warfare as terrorism at all times and in all circumstances” (the *Cape Times* of 1977).

The lexeme “terror” was then applied in different combinations, of which perhaps the most frequent is “terror-stricken,” but the two most interesting ones relate to *abuses by jailors* and to *bombing*. Already in 1897 convicts “sweat terror-drops beneath their blankets” (at night), and in 1970 this is sardonically explained in George Jackson’s letter from a US jail, which runs in part: “...our cells were being invaded by the goon squad: you wake up, take your licks, get skin-searched.... Rehabilitational terror” (*Soledad Brother*).

“Terror-bombing” is documented in print in 1941 for Hitler’s use against Rotterdam, but it was surely used also to describe the Luftwaffe bombing of Guernica in the Spanish Civil War and its subsequent “blitzes” (lightning strikes) against Warsaw, England, Belgrade, etc. The *OED* definition is “intensive and indiscriminate bombing designed to frighten a country into surrender,” and from 1940 on, terror bombing of German cities was deliberate British (and then US) military policy, estimated to have killed over half a million people (Walzer 255-62). It had its roots in Italian, Spanish, French, and British imperial uses against colonial uprisings before 1940 in Libya, Morocco, Iraq, Somalia, and Ethiopia (see Lindqvist and Davis). It has gone on in spades in subsequent US and allied ventures—advancing from Dresden and Hamburg, then Tokyo and Hiroshima, to Hanoi, the Gulf War, Serbia, and our days—as well as in minor imitators, as a technoscientific form of mass murder. It should be mentioned that while today the practices of the US government are the main problem, historically the US are not responsible (except perhaps by example) for many other terrorisms, from air or ground—for more recent examples, Iraqis gassing Kurds, or Russian armed forces and then the “Islamist” counter-terrorists in Chechnya. In that sense, Hitler has won.

2. Who Is a Terrorist?

The Conservative English historian and politician Harold Nicolson confided to his diary for 1968: “When people rise against foreign oppression, they are hailed as patriots and heroes; but the Greeks whom we are shooting and hanging on Cyprus are dismissed as terrorists. What

cant!" (*OED* s.v. "terrorist"). Today the (non-)definition according to the US government and all the consensual NATO media is very simple, if circular: as Uri Avnery notes, terrorists are all the armed enemies of the US-led coalition against bin Laden and his (not further delimited) "terrorists." Notoriously, the official US literature on terrorism for the last 30 years "evades definition.... [It doesn't] define terrorism because definitions involve a commitment to analysis, comprehension, and adherence to some norms of consistency" (Ahmad). It can never be repeated too often that bin Laden's network was brought about and (among other proxies all around the globe) used for guerrilla warfare, including terrorism, by the USA and its allies, so that it would not have existed but for the murderous cynicism of the morally and materially responsible States; Ronald Reagan called a delegation of Afghani anti-Soviet fighters in 1985 "the moral equivalent of America's founding fathers," and spent four billion US dollars to train and arm their zealots. And even today, as Chomsky put it, "there are plenty of bin Ladens" (as well as murdered civilians) on both sides of the conflict that burst upon the world with the Twin Towers attack (9-II, 34).

The US is not alone in self-interested dodging of a definition of terrorism: its clarification renders all strong States uneasy. For example, this was dropped from the jurisdiction of the proposed International Criminal Court in 1998 precisely because of a deadlock over a definition, which seems to stem from the powerful being unwilling to accord any—even totally negative—precise and legal status to that notion. For on its heels would come the possibility of recalling the term's original meaning, which pertains to governmental actions. Avnery's own, only semi-ironical definition is: "The difference between freedom-fighters and terrorists is that the freedom-fighters are on my side and the terrorists are on the other side." After Clinton bombed Sudan and Afghanistan, Solomon mimicked the official nonsense more fully: "When they put bombs into cars and kill people, they're uncivilized killers. When we put bombs on missiles and kill people, we're upholding civilized values. —When they kill, they're terrorists. When we kill, we're striking against terror."

This type of defining is easy, for it rests on an argument by authority and by ostension reducible to: "terrorism is what I point to when I say that word"; this can be thoughtlessly reproduced on the basis of one or a very few visible and televisable instances of undoubted terror attacks. Such is the case with the crashing of planes into the World Trade Center towers. (It is interesting to note that pictures of the damaged Pentagon soon disappeared from TV screens and other media follow-ups. The reasons may include military sensitivity plus smaller spectacularity, but

I'd think another factor is that it was of dubious efficiency as thought-suppressing propaganda since it raised the argument of whether all those working in the Pentagon are to be considered soldiers or not. If yes, this would be an act of aggression and killing in an undeclared war—such as there have been plenty in these last years—but an act of terror/ism only insofar as the plane passengers were concerned. And propaganda cannot face arguments.) Terrorists are then “people I say have committed the act I’m pointing to (trust me, I know).”

Nonetheless, defining-by-fiat-and-pointing transgresses so offensively against elementary rules of reasoning and understanding that it eventually runs up against grave disadvantages. US columnist Michael Kinsley noted that the disadvantages were already felt in the 1980s when defining terrorism was (inconclusively) a major industry in Washington because “a definition was badly needed to explain why [the US government was] supporting a guerrilla movement against the government of Nicaragua and doing the opposite in El Salvador”—and in very many other places. He also reported that “Reuters has banned the word in reference to Sept. 11 [2001] and CNN officially discourages it.” This dilemma has, for a small example, led to at least one European newspaper, quite supportive of the US war but still grasping for some elementary logic, calling its daily rubric “War against bin Laden.”

An important ingredient of the Bush Jr. administration's rhetoric is the systematic slippage between, and finally equation of, “terror” as a quality or action and as the personification of this quality and/or action; such a personification was in the *OED* examples (see part 1 above) also called “terror” but the US Government *newspeak* has settled on “terrorism” and “terrorists.” The reason for this, I suspect, is that “-ism” and “-ists” are by unargued assumption foreign, ideological, and non- or Un-American (except for patriotism to the “Homeland,” another newspeak coinage unfortunately similar to the Nazi “Heimatsfront”). Even “terror” in the sense that implies political killings of civilians was a British semantic import aimed at aliens: it is always something “they” do and “we” do not. At any rate such a terrorism is a transcendental, evil or downright satanic quality, rather than a group of people. “Terrorists” are therefore not people who have such-and-such views for such-and-such reasons—both of which might be totally wrong, but one would have had to argue it clearly and convincingly. Rather, “terrorists” are people who participate in the evil totemic essence of “terrorism.”

Although we are by now in an unholy alloy of heretic theology, tribal myth-ritual, and Machiavellian pragmatics, I'd agree with Kinsley that Bush's slogan of “war against terror”¹ has the obvious political advantage

¹ I shall not enter into the thickets of legal debates, which on the whole seem

of rallying the citizens of the USA and other nations to whatever armed actions may be proclaimed as being anti-terrorist. The undefined status of the target, the satanic ubiquity of the evil (a mutated or cloned successor to Reagan's Evil Empire), means that this can be extended at will to whatever State or group a huge propaganda campaign can successfully present as terrorists. The authority for this is derived not primarily from law but from a theological pretence at global omniscience (see Ahmad for a small list of instances where US knowledge was insufficient or wrong, but the career of bin Laden is proof enough). Thus the US government, while semantically incoherent, has at any moment had clear practical or pragmatic delimitations as to who was and who was not a terrorist, in order to decide who is to be respectively helped, neglected, or attacked. The delimitation was based on use of armed force against US government and corporate interests, and will be discussed further in Section 3.

However, Kinsley rightly points out an equally obvious disadvantage: "a war against terrorism cannot be won. Terrorism is like a chronic disease that can be controlled and suppressed, but not cured [by war]." In Avnery's example, the Nov. 2001 "blockade against Palestinian villages by the Israeli army, which ... denied them water and food, does not isolate the 'terrorists,' but on the contrary turns them into national heroes. The devastation caused by the Russians in Chechnya

disingenuous and self-serving—cf. the survey of major international agreements on this subject in Elagab, of their application to present day in *Le Monde*, Nov. 18-19, 2001, and Brown for the present-day European governmental attempts to use Sept. 11 in order to incriminate even non-violent political contestation (Prime Minister Thatcher tried to apply the anti-terrorist law to British miners on strike). As Brown remarks, the imprecision in defining so as to give maximum interpretative latitude to authorities violates the fundamental legal principle "no crime without law," that is without clearly defined infraction. The prevailing opinion at least among European legal commentary seems to be that Bush's war is "legally false and loaded with dangers for the future" (Pellet).

On the contrary, however, there seems to exist at least a strong presumption that killings for purpose of terror are war crimes—see the Additional Protocol I of 1977 to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 about victims of armed conflicts. Are the old norms of international law really obsolete? According to them, the US war against the Taleban—or vice versa—is not a war without a declaration of war. (There was no declaration either in the normatively illegal case of the attack on Serbia, never accused of terrorism or aggression against the bombing nations and left alone during years of organizing terrorism in Bosnia, but bombed for fake "humanitarian" reasons; indeed, no US war since World War II has been declared by the US Congress.) Does ending it without a peace agreement or formal surrender imply that, if the Taleban—or some analogy to them—re-emerge, the war may be restarted without further ado? Since Al Qaeda exists, we are told, in 60 countries, can any of them be subjected to the fate of Afghanistan if the US government so decides? And so on.

did not break—indeed, it strengthened—the opposing guerrilla forces.” Thus, Avnery is right to say that “Since terrorism is always a political instrument, the right way to combat it is always political. Solve the problem that breeds terrorism and you get rid of terrorism.” It can only be durably cured by removing its root causes, psychological, political, and finally economic (humiliation, poverty, and hunger). If the Taleban are to be lastingly defeated, which would be in the interest primarily of the Afghani people, *they* will have to do it—with a lot of help, mainly economic, from outside. Otherwise, some analog to the Taleban, in or out of Afghanistan, will recur.

The question arises then what will happen if the Taleban armed forces go underground, into guerrilla warfare or indeed into abeyance, but the terror attacks do not cease. How will the war be continued? Proxies, similar to the terrorist Contras or the murderous Northern Alliance, can easily be found and paid. A little bombing here and there, as has been going on against Iraq for 10 years, can easily be arranged. But would this suffice for US government psychological warfare at home and abroad or for US corporate profits—which finally subtend the government actions?

Clearly, the temptation is huge to fabricate another “rogue State” for full-scale bombing (Iraq?—or a number of other possibilities between Libya and the Philippines). In that case we would be outside a believable link to terrorism. Other demands, such as giving up atomic, biological, and chemical (ABC) weapons, would have to be adjoined. But then one wonders what would be either the legal or the moral case for keeping them by the US, Russia, and other powers? Would any force strong enough be entitled to bomb their ABC stocks? If not, those of us who are against murder for political—as for other—purposes would have to find out why not (other than “I say so and if you don’t obey me I’ll kill you”)?

Kinsley also notes that the definition of terrorism is a problem for civil liberties. The problem has been brought about by President Bush and the US government defining its response as “a war against ‘terrorism,’ not just against the perpetrators of the particular crime of Sept. 11.” What liberals like Kinsley pretend not to see, however, is that the “‘war on terrorism’ ... is the long-sought-after replacement for the ‘red scare,’ justifying a permanent war footing and paranoia, and construction of the greatest military machine ever: ... the ‘full spectrum dominance’ of the world” (Pilger 10). If the “war against terrorism” will be, as it seems to be intended to be, an ongoing affair of years or even entire generations, and if—given the lack of definition—in a “broad” or elastic sense anybody who opposes or even hampers “the war effort” may be identified as a terrorist or helper and associate of terrorists, this practically assures a

militarized Fortress North America—and a docilely following Fortress (West-Central) Europe. Since continent-sized impermeable fortresses are not possible, a patchwork of smaller “gated” security areas for the rich has already been appearing long enough for J.G. Ballard to have written several canny (or is it uncanny?) sarcastic novels about it. As it becomes clear this war cannot be won or finished once and for all but may go on to include other strikes against resurgent or even threatening evil, a constantly strengthened police State, including private mercenaries, will be required. It is already well under way.

That the stress that has been put on the huge threat to civil liberties is not simply crying wolf is confirmed by Bush’s executive order of Nov. 13, 2001, allowing the unlimited detention of foreign suspects and the setting up of military tribunals to judge people accused of terrorism, and moreover demanding the right for those tribunals to judge anybody anywhere in the world. In the context where economically the world is increasingly coming to look like a bloated, racially over-determined version of rich suburbs vs. sprawling slums for the poor, imposing martial law at will is a move toward a global Iron Heel: the slogan “no to globalization” suddenly acquires new dimensions.

Thus, since US citizens are not the only people in the world, the definition of terrorism should, to my mind, be *as precise as possible*: narrow as concerns civil liberties in the USA and its allies, broad as concerns preventing killings of civilians abroad.

3. Exemplary Killing of Civilians for Political Purposes

What then may reasonably be called terrorism, without reducing this word to an empty noise of brainless condemnation and blind self-congratulation? As Kinsley asked: “So what distinguishes terrorism? Is it the scope of the harm? Most terrorist actions are fairly small-scale compared with the death and destruction committed by nation-states acting in their official capacities. Even Sept. 11 killed fewer people than, say, the bomb on Hiroshima—an act that many Americans find easy to defend. So can terrorism mean acts of violence in support of political goals except when committed by a government?” (This would mean, I add, that George Washington was, but Adolf Hitler was not, a terrorist.) What about “State-sponsored terrorism”? This too does *not* distinguish the “rebel groups that [the USA is] flooding with help from other groups that [the USA is] trying to destroy.” The Hiroshima and other World War bombings of civilians may seem both far away and responses to an urgent danger (they are in fact neither) against clearly terrorist Nazi

Germany and Imperial Japan. But what about US-sponsored murders and tortures of tens of thousands of civilians in Central America, or in Chile beginning on Sept. 11, 1973? Has any administration after Kissinger disavowed them or asked forgiveness from the Latin American peoples? Do the American people know that the World Court condemned the USA for mining Nicaraguan harbours in 1986?

In that sense, where Kinsley, as a good liberal, finally throws up his hands in facetious despair, I think Avnery is right but incomplete when he defines terrorism as “a method of attaining political goals by frightening the civilian population.” As he argues, bombing or otherwise killing soldiers is not terrorism: nobody has tried to apply it to the Japanese at Pearl Harbour, the Germans or English fighting in North Africa, the US at Okinawa or Normandy, the Soviets in Stalingrad or taking Berlin, and so on. When the British called Jewish guerrillas in Palestine terrorists or the Nazis called the Yugoslav or Soviet or Polish or Greek guerrillas killing Wehrmacht soldiers terrorists, and hanged or shot them out of hand whenever captured, they were doing violence to their—English or German—language as well as to the occupied and (truly) terrorized populations; conversely, the Nazi killing of civilian hostages as reprisal for guerrilla actions, or the Japanese Imperial Army’s “rape of Nanking,” was terrorism within a war. Both the White armies and the Red Army in the Russian Civil War 1917-21 “liquidated” political enemies in or out of army wear, while Stalin’s liquidations of richer peasants or Old Bolsheviks carried this practice on in huge proportions and without the excuse of armed conflict. On the other hand, the policy of Mandela’s ANC did not preclude terrorism, the Maccabees killing hellenized Jews were clearly terrorists, early ethnic cleansers, and so were the Irgun insurgents (says Avnery, who was himself an Irgun member) throwing bombs in 1938 into Arab bazaars in Palestine or shooting up a bus full of Arab civilians. Being a dissident Israeli patriot, Avnery points out that

Israel has used this method [terrorism] from the day of its inception. In the early 50s the IDF [Israeli army] committed “retaliation raids” designed to frighten the villagers beyond the border in order to induce them to put pressure on the Jordanian and Egyptian governments to prevent the infiltration of Palestinians into Israel.... In the 1996 “Grapes of Wrath” operation, Prime Minister Shimon Peres terrorized half a million inhabitants of South Lebanon by aerial bombardments into fleeing North in order to pressurize the Beirut government into stopping the Shiite guerillas from attacking the Israeli occupation force and its mercenaries.

However, Avnery's definition lacks the element of exemplary killings in order to cow the rest of civilians for a political objective. Without this, we'd get to the unhelpful conclusion that, say, gangster/mafioso killings aiming for advantages such as turf domination, or sociopathological individual killers, both of which lack an agenda of full political domination, would also be terrorist acts. While there are grey zones here, my provisional definition would therefore run: *terrorism is a strategy of pursuing political power by striking dread into the civilian population through exemplary killings among them.*²

It follows that terrorism is, in the media age, a matter of influencing through huge bodily harm the collective imagination by transfer contagion: an exasperated form of psychophysical warfare grafted upon techniques of economic and political propaganda.³

As to differentiations within terrorism, *Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* put it nicely: terrorism is "the use of terrorizing methods of governing or resisting a government" (cited in Ahmad). A first typology of terrorist entities should differentiate between *State terrorism* and *group terrorism* by religious and political groups.⁴ The types overlap and intertwine: States use paramilitary or gangster vigilante groups for murders (most often in Latin America) when they don't want to acknowledge what they do; religion is nowadays consubstantial with the self-identification of a community aspiring to political power or sovereignty (Northern Ireland, the Shiites vs. the Sunnis in the Moslem world); apparently purely political terrorists have since the Russian Narodniki exercised a lay absolutism that is a hidden religion. Nonetheless, when one adds a second, nowadays absolutely necessary set of criteria, the *politico-technoscientific* ways of carrying out terror/ism or being terrorists, it may

² I gather similar horizons exist in the US 1984 Code (see Chomsky, *Pirates* 177) and in the EU convention of Jan. 2000 against the financing of terrorist acts (see *Le Monde* 15). And of course arguments similar to mine have been insistently made for the last 20 years by Walzer, Chomsky, Herman, and many others. I do not much care about being original, I care about being clear and consistent in view of the new escalation.

³ Outside of the indirect light thrown by Otto and Tücke, I haven't come across any notable contribution to the understanding of the psychic springs of terror. The only other pointer I know of is Ann Radcliffe's argument in 1826 that terror is the diametrical opposite of *imaginative* (fictional or hypothetical) considerations of horrible possibilities: the latter "expands the soul, and awakens the faculties to a high degree of life; the other contracts, freezes, and nearly annihilates them" (unfortunately, her terminology was topsy-turvy to our present usages, that is, "terror" was the good term and "horror" the bad one for her).

⁴ Cf. Ahmad, whose typology is wider than I'd defend, and Tigar. On State terrorism see the indispensable works by Chomsky, Herman, George, and Stohl below, full of startling data.

become apparent that there is a good reason for differentiating State and non-State terror/ists: States can use terror-bombings (and shelling by heavy artillery); the others don't have such means—yet. That's why the Sept. 11 terrorists had to improvise flying mega-bombs by imaginatively recategorizing and then converting passenger airplanes into them.

Politically, and even corporeally, there are two main technoscientific ways of carrying out terror/ism or being terrorists: *terror-bombing*, and *all other* terror killings. Insofar as the US/ NATO bombings of Serbia and Iraq were not pointed at their armed forces but against the infrastructure of daily life—power stations, bridges, non-military factories, etc.—for the purpose of getting the civilian population to turn against a government obnoxious to the bombers (which succeeded in a sufficiently democratic Serbia but failed in a fully dictatorial Iraq), they were terror-bombings and their perpetrators terrorists. This leaves open the vexed question of intent, that is: can “collateral” killings of civilians, when unintended, be exempt from the charge of terrorism? To my mind, in this field of systematic muddying of waters and PR spin-doctors, proclamations of intent count for very little: it is a matter of reasonably weighing both political evidence and number of victims. Bombing from high altitudes looks rather like “substituting Afghan [or Iraqi or Serbian, DS] civilian for US military casualties” (Milward 164). As to the number of civilian victims, the most nearly believable sources speak about 2-3,000 in Serbia and 5-6,000 so far in Afghanistan: entirely too much to be defensible. As Herman and O'Sullivan concluded about Vietnam: “Killings are not ‘inadvertent’ [or ‘collateral’, DS] if they are a systematic and inevitable result of calculated military policy” (51).

By far the largest number of victims of terrorism is due to State activities backed by territorial control and/or heavy weaponry: somewhere up to one million “communists” assassinated in Indonesia 1965-66; over half a million people each by South African (and French and US) proxies against Angola and Mozambique; ca. 300,000 by the Pol Pot regime in Kampuchea; ca. 200,000 in Guatemala 1966-85; ca. 200,000 by Indonesian army in East Timor; tens of thousands in other Latin American countries from Chile and Argentina to El Salvador; and thousands killed by the Israeli army or their proxies in Lebanon and Palestine. In contrast (little as such figures may mean in human terms), the largest number of non-State terrorist victims was ca. 300 during 1968-81 in Italy and ca. 700 Israelis in the Palestinian Intifada.⁵ The

⁵ See on this at least Herman-O'Sullivan, from whom I take my figures (except for the Intifada). They do not include victims of terrorism and war crimes in Vietnam, where there seem to have been ca. 3,000,000 Vietnamese killed by bullet or chemical warfare, and in the first war on Iraq, which seem to run to more than 1,200,000 Iraqi

al-Qaeda "airliner rammings" of 2001 produced thus the largest death toll not perpetrated directly or indirectly by an organized State. The non-airforce terror of the political and religious groups (let me call it lamely "ground terrorism") is a weapon of the weak—a Palestinian is quoted by Avnery as saying: "Give me tanks and airplanes, and I shall stop sending suicide-bombers into Israel"—or simply diplomatically and strategically convenient, such as the Contras as imperial proxies in Latin America or the Serbian paramilitary killings in Sarajevo. This does not make it better. Neither the ground nor the air terrorists blasting civilians have any justification except political calculation of the most cynical kind.

4. Parting Considerations

The overriding criterion that emerges here is *preventing killing*: in the particular case of terrorism, it is killing *civilians for purposes of political domination*, which is by a ratio of about 100,000:1 (or more) the most prevalent one in this century. I would strongly argue for extending this criterion to include the only slightly, if at all less, horrible cases of maiming, wounding, and indeed—drawing on my personal experiences as a child—of psychic terrorizing by horrible fear of killing which always accompanies and often precedes bodily injury. I believe we should reject the Al Qaeda justification that the Sept. 11 victims are a minimal vengeance for the thousands, or indeed hundreds of thousands, of dead in Iraq, Palestine, and so on, because any "an eye for an eye" logic increases rather than diminishes killing. (Al Qaeda doesn't talk about the 500,000 to one million people killed after the Indonesian army coup of 1965, because those were infidel Leftists.) But I believe we should equally reject the undercurrent of such logic in "Western" justifications.

This means rejecting both horns of the definition dilemma. First, the view of free-floating, intellectually sterile cultural relativism according to which nothing definite can be said about terrorism. Second, the attempt by powerful States to define terrorism in such a way that only their enemies but not themselves would be guilty of it: this simply shows the arrogance of power where might is right. In both cases, terrorism cannot be persuasively delimited—or fought. What I'm arguing for is a post-Enlightenment attempt to reduce the scope of killings allowable

dead of bombs or the subsequent embargo. Of course, were we to take in killings between 1914 and 1960 in practically all European and many Asian countries, we would find even larger figures.

under any name. That religious fanatics should refuse distinctions such as those argued for here (for example between military and civilians) is understandable: they are at least sincere and above-board. But when governments whose Constitutions come out of the Enlightenment obfuscate those distinctions—so as to be in practice, because of their power, even more murderous—they too return to pre-Enlightenment absolutism, a kind of State religion. A strong doubt then arises about whether they know or mean what they say. Therefore, we have to call with Shakespeare for “a plague on both your houses” and with Fidel Castro and the Confédération Paysanne (and Pope John Paul II) for “No to terrorism, no to war.”

In order to do this with any consistency and therefore a chance of success, we need to focus first of all on the causes of terrorism; or better, on the motivations of terrorist groups. The reasons of the State groups are evident: furthering the power of the State and its objectives of domination. The non-State groups’ motivations are complex and differ from case to particular case, especially as between those who invoke religion and those who do not. But their common denominators might include (I’m trying to systematize Ahmad’s splendid discussion here): a) the experience of physical violence, hunger, and humiliation, a “mix of anger and helplessness [which] produces an urge to strike out.... to wreak retributive justice”; b) the identification of an external enemy responsible for this, which can politicize gang or ghetto violence; after the waning of class politics, the rich and powerful humiliators are identified as ethnic and/or religious foreigners, primarily as Americans and their helpers; c) a chance that retributive terrorism could have some noticeable effect; and d) the absence of a horizon for revolutionary seizure of State power. Revolutionary movements, especially Marxist ones, have historically discouraged and even morally condemned terrorism, though most of them probably also allowed its use at rare occasions of arguable—and often furiously debated—necessity. It was only after World War II that revolutionary movements began increasingly copying State terrorism as a strategy (cf. Walzer 198).

The above initial considerations do not “solve” or even enter into many other questions. Terrorism is a rare case where both moral and political criteria coincide to bring into sharp focus its inadmissibility. Even so, who are civilians? Policemen are not, to my mind, but further discussions would be necessary, for example, in the case of high government officials (in the Tsarist Empire they overtly had rankings equivalent to military ones—cf. Walzer 200-01). But most glaringly, what about other forms of today’s mass killings? I may be too optimistic, but straightforward genocide (as of Armenians or European Jews) seems to have left so

many scars on public opinion that it is difficult to return to it, unless we get into another world conflict. Terrorism obviously borders on guerrilla warfare, which I would consider morally admissible whenever not accompanied by terrorism, while politically one would have to judge it case by case—the old labels of revolutionary vs. counter-revolutionary are by now too simple (for example in Iran or Kosovo). Drug peddling is a constant Siamese twin of terrorism, from Latin America through Asia to Kosovo, its results are morally killings, and it is to my mind also unambiguously inadmissible (but then, what is a drug? alcohol or tobacco, anyone?). What is to be done about the equally murderous undeclared wars between States and the possibly much more murderous ABC weapons, further huge setbacks for civilization and victories for Hitler? War crimes kill far more people than terrorist crimes.

Furthermore, this text does not speak at all about the even more terrible, and more important, slow killing of over 500 million people on this wonderful globalized globe on their way to dying soon from chronic malnourishment (hunger) and preventable diseases, while over 800 million people live in “absolute poverty,” that is on the borders of famine and dying a bit more slowly (Drèze-Sen 35 and *Human* 20), and an unknown number perhaps approaching 3,000 millions are subject to “dramatic malnutrition” greatly shortening their lives (Robin). The ratio of killing for political domination vs. killing for other reasons would drastically change if we figured in deaths from hunger and preventable diseases; but then, a cynic might argue these also happen for indirect political domination....

Crucially, these notes don’t go into an in-depth discussion of the economic and psychological necessities of war for the ruling classes in today’s capitalism: by the time of the Gulf War, a conservative estimate of global spending for military purposes was between 2 and 2.5 billion (thousand millions) dollars daily. This would probably be decisive to clear up my own dilemma between Marxism and pacifism in the age of modern annihilation weaponry. Even historically, terror has always been a twin of aggressive warfare: the Jacobins were sublated (overcome but also continued) by Napoleon.

Europe, Winter of the first year of the new century

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(All translations into English are mine.)

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Exploring “Terror/ism”: Numinosity, Killings, Horizons (2004)

... after a minute Humpty Dumpty began again.

“...Impenetrability! That’s what *I* say!”

“Would you tell me, please,” said Alice, “what that means?”

“Now you talk like a reasonable child,” said Humpty Dumpty, looking very much pleased. “I meant by ‘impenetrability’ that we’ve had enough of that subject, and it would be just as well if you’d mention what you mean to do next, as I suppose you don’t mean to stop here all the rest of your life.”

“That’s a great deal to make one word mean,” Alice said in a thoughtful tone.

“When I make a word do a lot of work like that,” said Humpty Dumpty, “I always pay it extra.” ...

(Alice didn’t venture to ask what he paid them [the words] with; and so you see I can’t tell you.)

Alice in Wonderland, chap. 6

... *kikhánei d’ex aelptíes fóbos*. [From unexpected directions there comes terror.]

Archilochos of Paros, 7th Century B.C.E.

1. The Numinous (Sacred/Demonic) Dimension of “Terror” and Capitalism Today

[The “war on terrorism” is] the bombing of an abstract noun.

Terry Jones (formerly of *Monty Python*)

What is “terror”?¹ I start from the Oxford English Dictionary, which glosses its meanings as: 1. *intense fear, fright or dread*. The *Geneva Bible* of 1560 translates *Psalms* 55.4 as “The terrors of death are fallen upon me,” and the term was often used with portentous, supernatural events such as the death of Christ or the irruption of Pan. This provides a bridge to the second main meaning: 2. *the action or quality of causing*

¹ These considerations follow and expand on my article “Access to an Identification of ‘Terrorism’: Words and Actions,” in this volume.

[such] dread; terribleness; and a thing or person that excites terror, as in Addison's "The Messiah appears cloathed with so much terour and majesty" (1712). Such fossil remnants in English point to a depth dimension which seems to me to underlie in a semi-conscious way the word's present uses. At the basis of many, perhaps all, religions there lies what the Torah calls *emmet Jahveh*, the uncanny "God-dread" or "terror consubstantial with God," and the Greek tradition calls *deîma panikón*, "terror associated with the god Pan."

Already Epicurus slyly endorsed deviants from religion if pleasurable things liberate them from the mental terror (*fóbous tês dianóias*) caused by celestial portents—such as comets or eclipses—or by death or by pain (maxim X). In other words: religious faith seems to begin with a strong admixture and participation of *terror*, whereas philosophical or scientific inquiry begins with *wonder* that stimulates, without terror. Epicurus's great poetic interpreter Lucretius explained in *De rerum natura* religion as stemming from dread of death and other anxieties, in verses that have been scarcely bettered since:

Therefore, this mental terror and these dark recesses have to
be routed
Not by the Sun's rays nor by the shining arrows of day
But by an examination of nature and its causes. (transl. mine)

Rudolf Otto, who dug up the religious tradition of "the totally Other" centering on numinous horror, glosses it as a combination of unutterable terror with ensnaring fascination, a numbing and paralyzing surprise that simultaneously also attracts. That terrible force engenders in people attempts at propitiating and domesticating it by means of either magical participation or religious devotion, conjuration, and consecration (Otto 13-16, 32, 42-43, and see the comment in Türrcke 135-37). However, such a force can also be found in non-religious events of both wide and profound impact, which apart from natural catastrophes are usually—since the French Revolution—political events. Thus, Yeats sees in the 1916 Irish insurrection "a terrible beauty." As in that poem, *Easter 1916*, "All, all is changed utterly." Such events, whose political quality is grounded in (though usually not confined to) the Christian salvationism of Easter resurrection, portend an utter annihilation of all known orientations, akin to Death, the king of terrors (as in the 1611 *Bible*: "His confidence . . . shall bring him to the king of terrors"—*Job* lviii.14). The force of the term "terror" waned with classical religious feeling. This is palpable, for example, in the 1660s' "Ode to the Royal Society" by Abraham Cowley, which praises Francis Bacon for breaking

the “Monstrous God” Authority that made children and superstitious men afraid with “Ridiculous and senceless Terrors!” (Heath-Stubbs and Salman 107).

Yet the tradition was then reinvented within the sphere of supposedly rational politics, where the concept of terror—instead of divine and supernal—grew lay and as it were democratic, potentially lurking everywhere, applicable first by the divine right of the Powers That Be, then by revolutions, and finally by smaller groups from below. Historically, the breakthrough of the laicized concept of “terror” came about in the Jacobin State at the time of Robespierre, and was aimed at the “evil” enemies in collusion with foreign States. Group terror/ism, which followed later in the 19th century, for a long time (with Russian Narodniks, European anarchists, and even the 1930s’ IRA) limited its targets to military and higher State officials against which it claimed to be retaliating. Thus, the exclusive focus on non-State terror/ism is a blatant invention of contemporary State propaganda. As Michael Walzer observes, “terrorism in the strict sense, the random murder of innocent people, emerged as a strategy of revolutionary struggle only in the period after World War II, ... after it had become *a feature of conventional war*” (198; my emphasis)—that is, after the new “total war” had grown to be “the combination of unlimited use of highly destructive weapons [with] unlimited war aims” (Liddell Hart, cited in Kunz 40). Walzer perhaps overlooks some cases between the two World Wars, but those would detract in no way from his main point: that the globalization (that is, blowback to Europe) and “democratization” of wars in the age of capitalist imperialism was a return to colonial and religious wars blithely using mass exterminations from the rise of the State to the Enlightenment. For a brief time after the horrors of the European Wars of religion in the 17th century, both professional officers and professional revolutionaries cultivated “a kind of warrior honour” that impeded random killing of civilians—with the exception of the colonies whose “savages” were arrogantly deemed to be outside civilized norms. Thus, when revolutionary assassins are called terrorists, this is “a ... victory for the [State] champions of order” (Walzer 197), and this official “linguistic engineering” is an important component of politically and psychologically repressing the reality of killing civilians.

We can begin to recover the reality of such slaughter by defining terrorism as *a strategy of pursuing political power by striking dread into the civilian population through exemplary killings among them*. Walzer’s definition was much the same. In this context, it is a historical fact that terrorism by non-State groups is as a rule a reaction to mass State oppression and State terrorism; I shall focus on this in Section 2.

But first I want to query: why did a lay or secularized world, proclaiming rational politics increasingly supposed to represent the will of (the) people, use terror? The only answer I can see is that the economico-political situation in secularized societies was radically at odds with their proclamations of equality and fraternity, so that there were in fact no rational politics in the age of mass exploitation and warfare. While classical religions were now *de facto* and in many cases even officially divorced from sociopolitical life, the sources of religious feeling—of intense fear and fascination—did not dry up but were fed anew by reaction to exploitative and murderous disenchantment and diverted into new channels, virulently seething out of semi-conscious repression. Destiny did not pass into the hands of (the) people but re-established itself as the World Market, whose commanding godhead was Profit and executive agent the State. Arguably, it also retained or re-established traits of male gender and age domination (patriarchy) akin to feudalism and slavery. While officially desacralizing, *modern capitalism resacralizes* in new and unsuspected (therefore also less controllable) ways. As Hobbes was perhaps the first modern theoretician to divulge, fear is what holds together social order. The absolute market domination turns the selection mechanisms for its many called and very few chosen into “a new variant of destiny, which sometimes absolves or damns in ways as inscrutable as that of the Calvinist God” (Türcke 9).

This means that the *shocks* against the human nervous system and sensorium did not grow smaller in the mega-cities of capitalist industrialization. On the contrary, as Benjamin well learned from the poets of Paris beginning with Baudelaire (and we should add the poets of all other tremendous mega-cities, from Blake’s London to Brecht’s Berlin, Garcia Lorca’s New York, etc.), they became more frequent, and therefore had to get ever more intense in order to pass the heightened threshold of perceptive attention. The only defence against existing fear and terror of everyday life was to be found in further, prophylactic and homeopathic, administration of fear and terror. As all students of ancient religions know, Otto’s “Numinous” is not the positive Holy of schizophrenic Christianity. The Old Hebrew *qados* or Greek *hagios* meant a phenomenon that makes the perceiver shudder or shake in fright and awe; it is a *mysterium tremendum*, the ambiguously dreadful mystery not conceivable without terror. Equally, the Latin poet’s tag *auri sacra fames* did not mean “holy hunger” but “frightful or tremendous hunger after gold.” Capitalist society returned, with increasing high-tech speed, to such archaic myths and structures of feeling. The Nazis’ open adoption of such feelings and myths—for example, their deep though (or because) repressed fascination with the Wagnerian “gold of

the Nibelungs"—was only the consistent totalization of these bourgeois tendencies. What they seem to have done is exclude astonishment and reverence from the classical "numinous" in favour of direct terrorizing intimidation by political power and violence (Brinkmann).

This involution should surprise no one who has taken seriously Marx's great chapter on *commodity fetishism*, which was the first and remains the most stimulating discovery of a central mainspring of this resacralization. The old monotheistic godheads were monolithic, while commodity has both use-value and exchange-value at the same time. Insofar as the market, based on exchange-value and the engine of profit, is the ultimate instance of Destiny (the instance of salvation or damnation), commodity is literally a fetish, a *manifestation* of divinity. Simultaneously and to the contrary, insofar as the market is finally a monstrously perverted instance of conveying use-values (corn, cloth, or informed knowledge) to people, commodity functions merely as a surrogate *taking the place of* divinity or of a supreme survival value (isotopic to it)—like Godot instead of God. An ontological oscillation comes about,² producing differences both at different times and at different ends of the market (say the stock market vs. the supermarket): the new godhead is powerful but occulted and intermittent. This is why it can successfully hide itself within the temples of official economics and politics: if you look at it with the naked eye, it is not there (you could not see capitalism in a photo of the Krupp factories but only by analyzing how they function, remarked Brecht). This is also why saying that capitalism is a new religion does not quite hit the target unless its newness is duly articulated and stressed, for capitalism simultaneously is and is not what we knew as religions heretofore (you need dialectics). The strong ritual cults of capitalism are not simply nostalgic metaphors, nor are they its be-all and end-all. Into the gap of these oscillations the audiovisual shocks of mass media insert themselves, exasperating them.

A similar discourse should, to my mind, be developed about the second main fetish within capitalism, *labour-power* as the alienation of Marx's living labour. Unfortunately we don't have much on this by either Marx or Benjamin, but it clearly partakes of the Janus nature of commodity (and indeed underlies it). Labour-power is both sold as a commodity

² Türcke 232-33 (and cf. 204-08) calls it "ontological indifference" but to my mind this is too static. Nonetheless I wish to record how much I was stimulated by his work. My thanks also go to a number of friends who helped. For one of the first reinsertions of the fetish theory into contemporary sociology, see Deutschmann. Of course, before and since Simmel's *Philosophy of Money*, and indeed Marx's notes on Shakespeare, the works not always helpfully equating money with Mammon have been legion.

and yet not fully separable from the body's living labour. In particular, Debord's spectacle as a key to present-day class hegemony reposes on reified presentations of the body in erotics, warfare, and so on, which induce an even more intimate ontological oscillation. The need to alienate and freeze labour into disembodied machines on the one hand and invisible outsourcing on the other can clearly be seen in modern warfare (a labour of destruction, true, but labour nonetheless) with its helicopter shelling and high-altitude bombing. This may serve to retrospectively characterize analogous developments in the clearly antagonistic (as it were) daily mini-warfare within production relationships in general.

Markets were always associated with spectacle (clowns, jugglers, magicians, conjurers); the masses that gathered needed relaxation after transacting affairs and had money to pay for it. Indeed, spectacle came in even before and as a part of transacting business, for goods were praised by criers, they were arranged and doctored, etc. The term stock-market comes, so the US legend goes, from stock (cattle) led to fairs in old New York and watered on the way to make them seem fatter. Initially circumscribed in time and place, markets grew from local fairs on a given saint's day into a permanent marketing, infinite in space and time—like the Bushist war. The basis was laid for what Debord has called the society of spectacle: a society where *spectacle* (seeing extraordinary matters) has become a dominant, if not the dominant.

Capitalism notoriously despises and fears independent esthetics: art. But capitalism has since its inception used spectacular “commodity aesthetics” (Haug) to make wares circulate. Indeed, one could say, with Türcke (9-11), that it has always incorporated a kind of totally pragmatic sub-aesthetics, which is not a cloak it could shed but a skin, its protective appearance without which it would die. In that respect, fairs rivalled temples in their use of spectacles and spectacularity, of fascination with judicious admixtures of fear/terror. Both pretended to reveal the mysteries of destiny, and both sometimes obliquely managed to convey it (say in tremendous stock-market crashes like 1929). The fetish of commodity differs from old wooden fetishes of local godheads primarily by being consubstantial to the *usable* commodity and not standing outside it to be independently adored (though the difference grows thin in today's speculative futures markets). But it also differs in being constantly challenged and alerted by competition between sub-species of fetishes—a thing unknown to static or “cold” societies before capitalism and leading to irresistible heightening of sensational spectacle. (An exception like the Late Roman Empire, when Mithra, Isis, and Christ competed with the local godlings, confirms the rule and throws an interesting light on today's Late American Empire.) Not only

theology but also political economy and even neurophysiology — the way spectacle changes people's sensorium and perceptive capacity — are now needed to cope with the global mega-fetish and its ramifying variants.

What has this all, fascinating as it may be, got to do with terror? I would claim that the link is implicit in all the talk about the potentially tremendous mysteries, the dread and fascination brought by the fetishes of spectacularized commodity and spectacularized labour-power/spectacularized body. But to put it explicitly: in my defining of terrorism as a strategy of pursuing political power by striking dread into the civilian population through exemplary killings, the psychological and neurophysiological element is "striking dread" or *intimidation*. This goal is well known also to theology, salesmanship, and war planning; when Trotsky rejected murdering civilians, he remained well aware of this horizon: "The problem of revolution, as of war, is to destroy the will of the enemy and to force him to capitulate.... War, like revolution, is founded upon intimidation ... killing single persons to intimidate thousands" (Trotsky 66, 70). Terrorism, the practice of inflicting terror, is thus — among other things but decisively — a stance, the expectation of political gain by killing civilians. Terrorism is a matter of influencing the collective imagination through huge bodily harm, by transfer contagion: an exasperated form of psychophysical warfare grafted upon techniques of economic and political propaganda in the media age. This transfer contagion has dreadful intimidation as political *end* and exemplary killings of civilians as consubstantial *means*. The actions of and reactions to al Qaeda (itself both a product of and reaction to US domination) are holy warfare of the monotheistic kind: Good against Evil, In God We Trust vs. The Great Satan. Marx concluded that the commodity cannot be understood without returning to some uses of theology. The same can be said for its bastard offspring with war-as-spectacle, terror/ism.

A further important turn of the screw to commodity fetishism was the extension and huge multiplication of industrialized audiovisual shocks in the mass cities by the use of mass technologies and by increased leisure time. This has been best analyzed for the mass press and then for the new media from movies through radio to TV, in this age of commodity, when spectacle rules our social imagination (Benjamin, Debord and on). What I have called group terrorism is not only spectacular, it is parasitic upon the existence of mass media as a mass spectacle of "infotainment." Many media critics immediately noted this after September 11, best perhaps Umberto Eco: "Bin Laden's purpose in striking at the Twin Towers was to create 'the greatest spectacle in the world,' never imagined even in catastrophe movies.... He was not waging a war, in which the number of eliminated enemies counts: he was precisely sending a terrorist message,

and what counted was the image.” The stab of dread seen at the epistemic remove of a TV screen is, as in horror movies, overlaid by the situational awareness of the safe living room—a dreadful entertainment. Without global media, there would in all probability have been no strikes at the Twin Towers. Beyond the number of victims (about which see part 2), what major difference is there between such group terrorism and the State terrorism that likewise kills civilians and likewise sends a media message of intimidation to potential enemies (but earlier often did so secretly, as in many US operations in Indochina)? It is that US State terrorism masquerades as war for noble humanitarian reasons and therefore evades global awareness of its killings wherever it can, in order to present them as surgical strikes in justly measured retaliation (or at worst as “collateral damage” errors, which are then discounted in the media). This is effected by controlling media through patriotic intimidation but where need be also through killings (as in the US bombing of the Belgrade TV station or its tank shelling of the journalists’ hotel in Baghdad).

Of course, we should be careful to use terms derived from theology in the same way Marx did—as tools, taken from a repository of human methodologies surprisingly fit for modern capitalism but coded in an absolutist religious age and way—rather than as our final horizons. Benjamin put it well, with characteristically pithy extremism: “My thinking relates to theology as the blotting paper to ink. It is entirely imbued with it. Yet if the blotting paper had its way, nothing that was written would remain” (I.3: 1235). This centrally means recognizing the sea change between the religious or absolutist type of numinous horror, using fear for pain, and its subsumption into humane creativeness, where ensnaring fascination sheds its paralyzing aspect and turns into cognitive wonder (as Epicurus and Lucretius implied). Freud differentiates the uncanny from what is purely gruesome (14: 364), but this has been best debated apropos of art. I know no better encapsulation than Baudelaire’s dictum: “C’est un des privilèges prodigieux de l’Art que l’horrible, artistement exprimé, devienne beauté, et que la *douleur* rythmée et cadencée remplisse l’esprit d’une *joie* calme” [It is one of the marvelous privileges of art that the horrible, when expressed artfully, becomes beauty, and that rhythmical and cadenced *pain* fills the mind with tranquil *joy*] (466).

2. *Focus on Killing: Some Consequences*

We sincerely believe that terrorism is a negative weapon, that it in no way produces the wished-for results, that it can push a people to oppose a given revolutionary movement, and that it leads to loss of life among its practitioners much higher than the advantages derived from it.

Che Guevara, *Guerrilla Warfare*

It is needful to ground our discussion by returning as far as possible to the data about killings of civilians by States as compared to those by non-State groups. I gave some examples in the preceeding article, but they need to be updated. The killings in “civil wars” with little direct foreign armed intervention (for example, in South Africa, Afghanistan between the interventions by USSR and USA, Colombia, ex-Yugoslavia, Sri Lanka, central Africa, and possibly Algeria and the Chinese “cultural revolution”—to which I devoted a section in the other article) are difficult both to evaluate numerically and to allot to State or insurrectionary group intervention, and will therefore not be represented, though I would tend to view them as terrorist on one or both sides.³ To situate the data, however, some delimitations have to be recalled and re-examined.

I propose to focus sharply on my definition of terrorism as the targeted killing of civilians. There follows from it, as the second step essential for any proper understanding that we must insist upon the distinction between State and non-State (group, *groupuscule*) terrorism. (Of course, these two originators may overlap when States finance, protect, and often organize paramilitary or gangster groups for murders they don’t want to be seen as committing—as happened not only in Latin America and Africa but certainly in Greece and probably in Italy, Northern Ireland,

³ In the exceptional case of Ulster (Northern Ireland) we have both accurate data and a painstaking examination by an anthropologist about how to categorize them. Between 1969 and 1994, ca. 3,170 people were killed, of which ca. 1,490 may be called combatants, official or unofficial, while 1,640 were clearly civilians and 40 unclassified. Of the civilians, 1,070 were Catholics killed by British police and army or by the “loyalist” paramilitary, and 570 were Protestants. While the latter were killed mainly by the IRA, one fifth (or about 115) were killed by the British and “loyalists,” apparently by mistake (Sluka, “For God” 132-33). Thus, the final count in my terms would be: victims of State terror, $1,070 + 115 = 1,185$; victims of non-State group terror, 455 (this is not what you read in English or other Western mass media). In a number of cases, I have been unable to learn how the killed victims are to be categorized, and these are not represented in my Table (e.g., the ca. 800 killings ascribed to the Basque ETA group).

and indeed the USA. Furthermore, we might well wish to claim many of the casualties of invading State armed forces—say, US soldiers—as victims both of the State that brought them there and the group that killed them, but I wouldn't know how to count that.) However, the argument developed above leads me to doubt the secondary distinction I made earlier between religious and political group terrorism. The shift in the last 160 years or so from non-State group violence in the name of social classes to that in the name of ethnic groups and finally religions is certainly worth understanding (cf. Jurgensmeyer), but whether the Oklahoma City bombing was the expression of a Christian fundamentalist or a “Sons of Gestapo” hate of the US State seems to me far down on the scale of cognitive relevance in any general politico-epistemological approach. Here too, the hegemonic common sense of the media and think-tanks proves fallacious.

Since World War II, the overwhelmingly major source of State terrorism directly and indirectly is the US State, that is, key ruling-class fractions in its military-corporate establishment. Though absent in the mainstream media, in particular censored from TV, this has been pointed out many times by Blum, Chomsky, Herman, Herman-O'Sullivan, George, Stohl-Slater, and other critics. The USA was, up to the advent of Bush Jr.'s escalation, officially committed to the doctrine of “low intensity warfare” (cf. Klare-Kornbluh) which was—like its predecessor “counterinsurgency”—as a rule indistinguishable from terrorism; as Chomsky points out (in 9-11 90), all of these quasi-theories go back to the Nazi counter-resistance model. Counterinsurgency already went more than halfway toward undeclared warfare (in which killing civilians would be counted as war crimes), prefiguring thus the Bushist adventures; it was applied in Cuba, Kampuchea, Laos, Lebanon, Libya, Nicaragua, and almost all the rest of Latin America—and going further back, in the Philippines (1899ff.).

Of course, others have also participated in State terrorism. In the 20th century these were often US client-States, such as Chile and Greece under military rule, Indonesia, Guatemala, El Salvador or Colombia, but sometimes they were merely encouraged by the US (and secondarily by the Stalinist) example: Turkey, Argentina under the military, Kampuchea under the Khmer Rouge, Russia in the Chechnyan secession war, various Central African governments. A special case, that pioneered practices later adopted by the USA, was Israel's interventions in Lebanon and the Palestinian territories. Rummel has calculated that in 1900-80 between 180 and 360 million unarmed civilians were killed by their governments.

I shall subsume Herman and O’Sullivan’s Table 3.1 (from A. George ed. 41f) and information from all other sources in the following twofold table confined to some main examples. A caveat: all data are estimates, subject to much error (usually upward correction would be needed), but they should be correct indications of the order of magnitude, and thus usable as qualitative indications and for comparative purposes:

CIVILIANS KILLED BY STATE TERRORISM

(main instances in the last 40 years)

- During US intervention in Vietnam: over 2,000,000
- US-assisted and inspired Indonesian army pogrom of “Communists” 1965-66: 500,000-over 1,000,000
- Intervention by South African, French, and US proxies in Angola and Mozambique: over 500,000
- During US bombing in Kampuchea: at least 200-400,000
- By the Pol Pot regime in Kampuchea: ca. 200-400,000⁴
- US bombings and proxies in Laos: ca. 350,000
- By the Indonesian army in East Timor: up to 300,000
- US-organized army repression in Guatemala 1962-96: 200,000

⁴ Here, as throughout this Table, there is *no* absolute evidential truth, but I attempt to follow the most believable or least biased sources, rejecting defenders of the State killings (which include US government and most US media estimates on the one hand, and the whitewashers of, say, the Pol Pot, Milošević or Hussein regimes on the other), as well as those organizations of the victims which might have a stake in magnifying their number. Despite many illusions and delusions in the pretended or real Left, I find sources such as Chomsky and Herman more anxious for truth than people to the Right of them. As a sample, I give here a rough overview of the debate concerning civilian victims of the Pol Pot regime, where my estimate diverges perhaps most sharply from what one usually finds in the mass media.

Pol Pot’s guerrillas were supported by the USA from 1968 on to destabilize the neutralist Sihanouk government. It is essential to recall that in 1969-73 US carpet bombings of Sihanouk’s Kampuchea caused up to 600,000 dead and a flight of hundreds of thousands more to the only safe place, the capital city (see Porter & Hildebrand; Herman “Pol Pot”; <[www.moreorless](#)>; Pilger “Recalling”), and thus set the tone for what was to follow; the *Far Eastern Economic Review* predicted one million deaths as the result of US bombings (see “Noam Chomsky”). Herman’s analysis concludes that Pol Pot’s executions amounted to 100-300,000 killed, with 650-700,000 more dead from disease, starvation, and overwork (the latter should morally be added in large part, though not entirely, to his regime’s horrendous record, but are not counted in my Table, for then I’d have to multiply most other figures of the directly killed by similar factors—see footnote 5). According to the encyclopedia <[en.wikipedia](#)>, the US State Dept. estimates the number of dead under Pol Pot at 1.2 million, which I take as the upper believable estimate, to be subdivided into killings vs. disease, starvation, and overwork. The legend of 2 million killed, often inflated to 3 or even 4 million, and still peddled by most US and allied media, arose from

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- By the Russian army in the Chechnyan secession war: several tens of thousands (number not found)
 - By the Indonesian army in western Irian (New Guinea): 80,000
 - US-organized army repression in El Salvador 1978 on: 70,000
 - By the Turkish army against Kurds 1984 on: several tens of thousands (number not found)
 - Argentinian “disappeared” and others killed 1976-83: perhaps 45,000⁵
 - Israeli and US excursions into Lebanon, 1985-96: ca. 38,000
 - US bombings of Iraqis in 1991 Gulf War: perhaps 20,000 or more
 - Counted as “smaller fry,” but think about each of these zeroes being a body in pain and terror: US-organized Contras in Nicaragua: 7,000; Iraqi poison gassing of Kurds 1988: ca. 5,000; US-organized army repression in Chile: at least 3,000; Israeli military killings of Palestinians: several thousands (number not found) up to 1993 (including the first Intifada) and at least 2,000 from 2000 on; US invasion of Panama 1989: 2-3,000; US and NATO bombings of Serbia: 2,000.
 - A special case is the killings of civilians by the US army, merce-

a French priest's book that *summed up* already inflated figures from US bombings *plus* Pol Pot killings, and which his supporters seem to have in part retracted when challenged by Chomsky (see “Noam Chomsky,” from which I take the data for the rest of this note). The two strongest scholarly but mutually critical contenders in the field today, based on demographic estimates of decline from expected population rise, are Ben Kiernan, head of the Yale Cambodian Genocide Program <www.yale.edu/gcp>, who estimates the decline at 1.5 to 1.7 million, and Michael Vickery, who estimates it at 700,000. Bear in mind that demographic decline is based on expectations of normal births and deaths, and has to be handled with great caution. Finally, the CIA estimate of the “decade of genocide” 1969-78 (including the US bombing) is 600,000, to be divided in my opinion into 200-400,000 victims of each of the terrorizing parties, and I adopt this in my Table. The most believable estimate of deaths under the Pol Pot regime is, to my mind, perhaps over 1 million, of which ca. 300,000 by State terrorist killing. This number is therefore most probably not larger than the Kampuchians dead by US State terrorist bombings—though all these numbers remain horrendous both absolutely and relatively to a small country.

For those willing to check it on their own, I recommend Google's “Pol Pot” holdings, but to stop at the first 10 of Google's 85 pages. One afternoon should be enough for an orientation.

⁵ For Argentina, the “desaparecidos” are 30,000. However, there are also 20,000 killed outright without disappearing, and even if we assume (improbably) 25% were guerrillas, it seems the rest were unarmed civilians (see Fossati 36-38). Thence my conservative 30 + 15 = 45 thousand.

naries, and allies in the present wars in Iraq and Afghanistan — not only because they are ongoing and open-ended, but also because they arguably should be called war crimes. However, since no war was declared and since Bush Jr.’s administration’s does not apply the Geneva Conventions on war prisoners, more mileage might be got by treating these one-sided wars as State terrorism: US and allies’ intervention in Afghanistan 2002: 4,000 (and counting). US and UK army and allies during Iraq invasion from 2003 on: at least 10,000 (and counting)⁶

CIVILIANS KILLED BY GROUP TERRORISM

(main instances in last 40 years)

— Italy (by “Red Brigades” and others) 1968-82:	334
— Palestinian killings of Israelis 1968-81:	282
— Germany (by Red Army Faction and others) 1970-79:	31
GLOBAL TOTAL 1969-80 (CIA estimate):	[3,368]
[Other estimates 1980-2000 not available to me but on the same order of magnitude]	
— Oklahoma City bombing:	ca. 150
— Killings in Bangla Dosh (mainly by “Islamists”) 1996-2003:	ca. 100
— Al Qaeda attack against USA, Sept. 2001:	ca. 3,000
— “Islamists” based in Chechnya, 1999 on:	over 1,000
— Palestinian killings of Israelis 2000 on:	up to 900
— Palestinian killings of Israelis during first Intifada	ca. 700

⁶ The Second Gulf (or Iraqi) War is particularly murky, for we don’t have reliable information about the forces fighting the US and its allies. It seems clear that they have now become disparate: ex-Baathists and infiltrating al Qaeda supporters on the one hand, and genuine popular resistance against foreign occupation on the other. At least the former wing is not averse to killing civilians for intimidation, and would thus fall under my rubric of “group terrorism.” It is unclear just what the numbers and especially proportions of victims of State and group terrorism are from this time on, and I have tried to stick to the main group and the year 2003 in the figure put into my table. However, the total number of civilians killed by both sides (but disproportionately more by the US army and its allies) seems now to be 30,000 according to independent reports from Iraq and various databases accessible from <www.humanrights.org> (heavily slanted toward US government and paragonovernmental sources); this would mean 30 Iraqi civilians killed for each US soldier.

A special case to be added are the civilian deaths caused by the sanctions brought against Iraq between the two Gulf Wars which UNICEF estimates at 500,000 children alone.

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- Killings in India (mainly by “Islamists”) 2001-2004 ca. 200
 - Bali nightclub explosions by “Islamists,” Oct. 2002 over 200
 - Al Qaeda attack on Madrid commuters, 2004: ca. 200

Comments:

A) *State terrorism overtakes group terrorism killing by a factor of between 500 and 1,000:1.* While we might dispute definitions and terminology, the fact remains that under any name the media of rich countries, the “North,” do not devote even one hundredth of the space spent on anti-North terrorism to noting (never mind analyzing) the horrendously huge killings going on in the “South” (see Herman’s classic *Real*, Chomsky, and for Latin America up to the 1980s also Cockburn). This is not only an offence against reason but shows also a clearly chauvinist-cum-racist bias: some lives are held to be worth 1,000 times less than others. Even the accurate accounting of the “White” victims as against the difficulty of knowing the exact number of thousands killed in the “coloured” parts of the world points to this. The Nazis’ shooting 100 “lower race” hostages for one German has had a feisty progeny.

B) This does not mean that the terrorist groups—whether claiming to be left-wing, Arab/Islamic, Irish (Ulster) Catholic or Protestant, or whatever—are as a rule morally any superior to the State killers. All use, in the words of a radical left-wing commentator, mafia tactics, “assassination of prisoners, a mysticism of violence, cynicism, arrogance, and disregard for others’ lives even independent of their role in the enemy machine” (Massari 421); moreover, the “red” groups’ infiltration by State secret services is still being debated. Almost all terrorists have a macho mentality, and the religious groups up to now seem to be entirely male.

C) The above tables not only do *not* count the wounded; they also don’t count the indirect but very real and often huge numbers of dead from other consequences of those killings. A good summary is presented by Marc Herold in a chart about ramifications of bombings. Beyond military deaths (entailing widows and orphans, and demographic imbalance) and the direct civilian deaths and injuries, he lists environmental costs, health costs, refugees, and the huge economic and psychological burdens which all these (together with destroyed infrastructure and remaining unexploded ordnance, with long-term health menaces from uranium, cyclonite, and perchlorates—detritus from ordnance) puts on everybody surviving, leading to premature death and other loss of life for decades ahead (in Malik ed. 217-19). In general, *all the data about people killed by States (except in civil wars) should be multiplied by at least three*

to get the number of short-term victims only, while the group killings, with less efficient technologies, seem to entail a smaller proportion of non-lethal victims. Counting not only the killed but all serious bodily injuries would probably increase the State vs. group terrorism proportion, perhaps nearer to 2,000:1.

Let me take only three further examples. The first is the al-Shifa pharmaceutical plant in Sudan which Clinton's government bombed, allegedly mistaking it for a chemical weapons plant. It thus destroyed 90% of Sudan's capacity to produce affordable medicine for malaria, tuberculosis, parasites, and other preventable diseases. The German ambassador to Sudan estimated that several tens of thousands of Sudanese have died as a result (Chomsky, 9-11 48f).

Second, the carefully avoided matter of uranium (wrongly called "depleted uranium") used in US and NATO ordnance. Vast areas of Iraq-cum-Arabia, of Afghanistan, and of ex-Yugoslavia and the Adriatic Sea (as well as many US and NATO soldiers, in Italy alone ca. 300) remain poisoned by this highly toxic material, possibly mixed with plutonium. The British Atomic Energy Authority calculated for the First Gulf War of 1991 that 500,000 potential deaths may be involved in that area alone (Pilger, *New* 51-52, 95). However, as compared to the 400-500 tons of uranium then used, in the 2003 war between 1,100 and 2,200 tons were used, so that the potential deaths might be between 1.5 and 2.75 million people (Zucchetti ed. 112, 229; Baracca 155, and, on radiation statistics, Bertell). This would be worse than Hiroshima and Nagasaki combined.

And of course, the best documented case concerns the dead from the total consequences of the war in Iraq 1991-2002, which killed more people than all the Mass Destruction Weapons in history, hypocritically invoked by the US government even though it is itself so far the only user of atom bombs and the main user of chemical weapons (Pilger, *New* 8). UNICEF estimated in 1998 that ca. 7,500 people were dying each month in Iraq due to the devastations of its infrastructure in 1991 (bombing of food warehouses, flour mills, water-treatment facilities, etc.—cf. *Needless*) and to the embargo: *a Twin Towers' outrage every 12 days for 11 years*. In all, the best estimate of the rise of mortality attributes 1.2 to 1.5 million indirect Iraqi deaths to the effects of the 1991 war, the majority of them small children. As the *New England Journal of Medicine* editorial of Apr. 24, 1997, put it: "The Cuban and Iraqi instances make it abundantly clear that economic sanctions are, at their core, a war against public health" (Malik ed. 367). So is any State violence against civilians conducted by bombing (US) and heavy

artillery (Israeli). So are the tens or hundreds of thousands of mines, cluster bombs, and uranium-encased shells in Serbia, Iraq, Afghanistan (and Vietnam: the mines are to be found in every zone of the 100+ wars of recent decades), continuing to explode, poison, and kill every day.

D) This introduces the age-old phenomenon of killings without weaponry, what I would call eco-killings. Again, I shall take only one example, out of very many possible ones—the 16,000 people killed in the Bhopal explosion and poisoning. In 1984 poisonous fumes escaping from the plant of Union Carbide covered 20 square kilometres of territory in the densely populated city of Bhopal (where the US company located its plant to avail itself of underpaid labour and generous tax incentives by the Indian government and to avoid the modest demands of US labour unions and tax authorities). 8,000 Indians died almost immediately, and about 500,000 were poisoned, of whom 8,000 more have died of the poisoning as of this date, with countless illnesses continuing and incessantly adding to the number of the dead. On the night of the poisoning, the local management of Union Carbide sounded no alarm, it even turned off the plant siren “to avoid unnecessary panic.” When 3,000 New York employees and workers were outrageously killed in 2001, all the world’s media rightly reminded us of it daily and for months on end. The Bhopal killings—morally and physically just as outrageous, even if due to criminal negligence rather than criminal intent, to criminally bad planning rather than criminally good planning—were news for a few days, and have since been rarely followed up by Western mass media. Instead, Union Carbide entered into lengthy litigation with Indian authorities, who finally accepted \$470 million as a (quite inadequate) compensation for the poisoning that affects also those born years later (cf. the victims’s site <www.bhopal.org>).

It would be inhuman to blame people for commemorating and analyzing either the Twin Towers or the Bhopal mass killing by itself. But it is equally inhuman to isolate one and forget the other. We live in one world, united if not by sympathy then by mass migrations, imposed WTO trade rules, imposed IMF financial rules, military satellites, unending warfare, and news media (and by now also by protests against all these). No analysis can possibly be persuasive unless it takes both these kinds of slaughter into account. Responsibility for the 16,000 killings in Bhopal lies with capitalist business people centered in the USA whose supreme value is greatest possible profits in the shortest possible time; responsibility for the 3,000 killings in the USA on 9/11 lies with people whose supreme value is the return to the slower, pre-profit times of direct patriarchal and slave-owning exploitation, without a world trade centered in the USA. The disregard for the lives of people is equal. It is

the callous stance of killers, or more precisely mass murderers.⁷

Regarding these two groups of killers we must unyieldingly adopt what I would like to dub the *Mercutio principle*: "A plague [on] both of your houses!" (*Romeo and Juliet*).

3. *Beyond This Horizon*

From the point 20th-Century revolt gets separated from its roots and deprived of any concrete morality, Sade or dictatorship, individual terrorism or State terrorism become the alternatives.

Albert Camus, *L'Homme révolté*

I wish to broach in an unsystematic way some prolonged consequences entailed by my discussion of war and terrorism. They have to do, at a first remove, with more general questions behind terrorism, that is, its root causes and the attitudes a radical Left may be expected to take up toward it. At a second remove, they have to do with the general sociohistorical horizons of the present period.

3.1. Though talking about how to understand various terrorisms, especially the "blowback" group (terrorisms responding to the pressures of empires), and then how to position ourselves as against them would require a book shuttling between political economics and depth psychology, at least two central points—again often made on the Left but never present in the media—ought to be recalled.

First, it is counter-productive, indeed productive of "blowbacks," that "the Western right-wing and most of the [official 'terrorism industry'] establishment furiously oppose any focus on 'root causes' of terrorism"

⁷ This ought to logically open up toward all other victims, direct or indirect, of savage capitalism on the global scale, but it would also result in a shoreless list of dead from hunger, diseases, unsafe workplaces, etc. Mesnard y Mendez cites cautious international sources, which speak of some 40 million people dying from starvation each year, while about 500 million are "chronically malnourished," that is, on the way to dying soon, and a further 800+ million live in "absolute poverty," that is, bordering on famine and dying a bit more slowly. In April 2003, the ILO report, based on incomplete national data, cites the number of dead from workplace injuries or diseases as 2 million (including 12,000 children). This includes 270 million accidents with 335,000 dead, and 160 million cases of "occupational diseases" with, for example, 334,000 dead from "toxic substances" (carcinogens etc.); here also, the wounded would be a multiple of the dead.

(Chomsky, in George ed. 71). Even liberals have plaintively pointed out that a purely military war against terrorism cannot be won, that terrorism entails a struggle for the “hearts and minds” of millions of people who can be up to a significant point controlled and suppressed, but not finally persuaded by bombs and shells. Already in 1989 ex-President Carter reflected:

We sent Marines into Lebanon and you only have to go to Lebanon, to Syria or to Jordan to witness first-hand the intense hatred among many people for the United States because we bombed and shelled and unmercifully killed totally innocent villagers—women and children and farmers and housewives—in those villages around Beirut.... That is ... what has precipitated some of the terrorist attacks—which were totally unjustified and criminal. (Malik 78)

It must be noted that, as in all liberal approaches, their end forgets their beginning.

In Avnery's Nov. 2001 example, the blockade against Palestinian villages by the Israeli army, which denied them water and food, does not isolate the “terrorists,” but on the contrary turns them into national heroes. This holds in spades for the subsequent killings and destructions regardless of consequences for the civilian population. Equally, Avnery notes that the devastation caused by the Russian forces in Chechnya did not break but strengthened the opposing guerrilla forces. Thus, he is right to conclude that “Since terrorism is always a political instrument, the right way to combat it is always political. Solve the problem that breeds terrorism and you get rid of terrorism.” It can only be durably cured by removing its root causes, psychological, political, and finally economic. In sum, group terrorism is the direct offspring of State terrorism and its preparations in hunger, fear, and exploitation. What we know of the al Qaeda cadres indicates that they come from the upwardly mobile middle class of Arab nations, mainly Saudi Arabia and Egypt (the two principal US clients), that is blocked from independence and frustrated (cf. Ali 293-94 and *passim*; Bishara; Minolfi).

It does not take much foresight to see that such terrorist groups will become a real threat if they get mass recruits from globalization's new “informal proletariat,” counting by now two fifths of the active population in the “South” (Davis 26 and *passim*). Such reservoirs, already between one and two billion people, will be fed by further military devastations and economico-political blockages. In that sense, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq are the ideal recruiting and training grounds for group terrorism.

I cannot enter here upon the huge question of how terrorism is properly to be met (a simple answer: with economic justice). As Chomsky pithily put it, "Drain the swamp and there will be no more mosquitoes" ("Drain"). I shall stress here only the factor of *fear*. In his final *Comments*, Debord prophetically noted how the autocracy of market autonomy and its new techniques of governing masquerade as "a perfect democracy [which] constructs its own inconceivable foe, terrorism. Its wish is to be judged by its enemies, rather than by its results"—for "compared with terrorism, everything else must be acceptable" (24). If the US and European societies succumb to the fear so zealously propagated not only by the terrorists but also by practically all of their own governments and obedient media, a vicious circle of escalation will be established. It will result in a destruction of the US social texture by adding at least \$885 billion to federal deficits in favour of militarized involution: "A society bingeing on fear makes itself vulnerable to far more profound forms of destruction than terror attacks. The 'terrorism war' ... is using these popular fears to advance a different agenda—the re-engineering of American life through permanent mobilization. The transformation is well under way. The consequences, if left unchallenged, will be very difficult to reverse" (Greider). As Franklin Roosevelt said in an analogous crisis, "the only thing to fear is fear itself—nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts..." (First Inaugural Address). In our times there is more to fear than fear itself, but his point remains valid.

Second, nobody on the Left can afford to neglect its long tradition of debates about terrorism (cf. Massari). Its socialist and Marxist wing has always maintained that the liberation of the masses of working people is a matter of self-organization by those masses. It has therefore always had a twofold attitude toward terrorism. On the one hand, this wing refused terrorism as a strategy, because such a choice both stemmed from and strengthened disbelief in the central task of mass politics: the subverting of existing class relationships. The socialists and communists held that terrorism is a desperate choice of those who have lost faith that these relationships *can* be reversed; furthermore, acts of terrorism as a rule strengthen the bourgeois State's hold on the orientations of working people. But on the other hand, holding that revolutionary violence is often a necessary and indeed indispensable self-defence against the dictatorial measures of the ruling class whenever threatened, the Marxists have as a rule refused ethical condemnations of most terrorist actions. Out of a long tradition perhaps it is enough here to cite the emblematic position of Gramsci commenting in 1921 on a botched anarchist dynamite attack against a police chief, which had exploded in a crowded theatre: "This

murderous attack ... is another episode of the period of chaos and barbarism into which Italy has been thrown by the economic and social crisis born of the imperialist war.... Before we absolve or condemn, we need to understand in the spirit of humanity..." (in Massari 138). In other words, the hypocritical bourgeois outcry against violence and sentimentality about innocent victims (at a time of worldwide imperialist wars which produce millions of such victims) ought to give way to political analysis precisely in order to lessen such victimization. With very few exceptions, this analysis meant rejecting terrorism.

But today, given the escalation of State terrorism by means of new weapons portending destruction of not only thousands but if need be millions (an escalation politically helped by what I have called group terrorism replying to State terrorism), I think we must be one whole notch sharper than the Marx-to-Gramsci-and-Guevara tradition. It should be said that the few exceptions allowed by this tradition should practically mean *no exception* to the rule of not killing civilians. As the Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish concluded, "Nothing, nothing justifies terrorism" (Gush-shalom). It would remain to be discussed which civilians are what Walzer calls "politically innocent" (200). As this thoughtful and honourable liberal (as he was at the time) put it:

Hatred, fear, and the lust for domination are the marks of oppressed and oppressor alike.... The mark of a revolutionary struggle against oppression, however, is not this incapacitating rage and random violence, but restraint and self-control. The revolutionary reveals his freedom in the same way as he earns it, by directly confronting his enemies and refraining from attacks on anyone else. (Walzer 205)

That does not necessarily mean forgetting, as Brecht said at the end of *Saint Joan of the Slaughterhouses*, that sometimes only force (*Gewalt*) helps where force reigns, as self-defence against absolute oppression. But it does mean avoiding the fatal confusion of tongues where force or violence is equated with terror, with killing civilians as example. As Engels exemplarily formulated it, "No communist has the idea of vengeance against individuals." To the contrary, while he acknowledged the unavoidable necessity of self-defence against precise enemies in his *Condition of the English Working Class*, he went on to argue that communism recognizes the necessity of proletarian bitterness against its oppressors, but transcends it because it is an affair for the whole of mankind and not only of the workers, and optimistically concluded: "The more the English workers take up socialist ideas, the more will

their present bitterness lose in savagery and crudeness" (298, cf. also 144-49).

3.2. Finally, I wish to open up these reflections onto the most general sociohistorical horizons, and ask two more questions, even if in a quite preliminary way. First, are we witnessing the beginning of the end of capitalism by violent suicide? Second, are there widespread popular material interests in the "North" (North America, western and central Europe, and the outlying dominions in Oceania) which make it probable that widespread popular support would be found for a fascist involution of capitalism? My tentative answer to both questions would be yes, with the rider that this is no cause for rejoicing.

David Harvey has argued persuasively that for innermost, so-to-speak technical, reasons of capital dynamics, "capitalism is always bound to be highly unstable unless it is held down by some coercive force (such as US hegemony backed by powerful central institutions like the World Bank and the IMF)" (xxvi). We can measure the distance travelled by capitalism since his diagnosis, dating originally back barely a decade, by the fact that the WTO-WB-IMF trefoil by now doesn't suffice to ensure the stability of capitalism, whose leading force, the USA, has therefore embarked upon permanent preventive warfare in the "South" (and more and more martial laws inside the "North" or metropolis) as the *ultima ratio regum*: that final argument of the rulers, brute force. We are therefore cycling back, in vastly inflated terms of space and time, to the situation of the First Industrial Revolution, which was based on a 12-hour working day, children's and women's labour, high mortality of popular classes, mass drugging, and other attendant desertifications of corporeal and mental values.

From its very beginnings, capitalism tended to a destruction of its natural basis: land and labour (today also water, air, climate, species diversity). At that earlier point, fearing the breakdown of the whole system, the British State intervened with a set of work laws that paved the way to a sustainable exploitation of the workers. The breakdowns today happen away from the "core"—in China, India, Latin America or Africa as well as in the "sunken" third of the "Northern" population—and are better masked by the more powerful and more cynical media of mass persuasion, so there exists an illusion that they can go on forever, or at least "to the last Chinese." This also means there is less chance of a return to non-warfare Keynesianism, which was the second wave of staunching the hemorrhages of capital. There are no more true liberal reformists as a political force, not even in the social-democratic camp.

This does not mean that chances for fighting back do not exist, only that we cannot expect them to arise from within the existing power system of political parties and trade unions in the “North” (except for fringes). The so-called Right is gladly drifting toward fascist militarism, the so-called Left is barely a milder Right, and the admirable gut-feelings of the “movement of movements” still have to find their political horizon—the “yes” in the name of which it says “no.” Probabilities (surely to be fought against) speak therefore for an Iron Heel trampling legal niceties and using increasing police violence inside and army violence outside the metropolis. This is today helped by most group terrorism, in an unholy feedback of mutual ideological legitimating of oppressions with State terrorism. Wallerstein’s or Chomsky’s (9-11, 19, 35) opinions that a Police State is unlikely repose on illusions of the Keynesian period, I fear. I hope my readers may find good arguments against what I’m about to pose, and I shall be glad if they do, but a solid majority of what Michael Moore calls “stupid White men,” that is of the US (and then west European) working classes are in fact not so stupid, they live their unhealthy lives off the super-exploitation of the real proletarians, the jobless, the immigrants, and the “South” (immigrants are the “internal South” within the metropolis), and they would sink from a low middle-class to totally proletarianized status if they did not live off it. Chances are that when it comes to the crunch their material interests will turn them, as a class or congeries of classes, to the Right, if need be a fascist Right, rather than to the Left. The record of US popular support for governmental militarization expenditures and policies clearly speaks for this, though occasional opposition—as the one that ended the Vietnam War—cannot be discounted if such policies come home in the form of dead youth rather than investments (cf. Hoffmann). Capitalism will never share enough wealth to bribe the pauperized proletarians of the world: but it can bribe as well as intimidate maybe one third of its population in one sixth of the world. The outlook for civil liberties seems to me rather dim, when the question is which social group is the next one to go under. If needed, White Supremacist groups and the swarming groups of private mercenaries can easily be co-opted into an arm of State repression, as we saw in the German SA or today (say) in Colombia or Iraq.

Thus, when capitalism as we have known it collapses, what kind of successor formation might come about? The age of individualism and free market is over, the present is already highly collectivized, and demographics as well as insecurity will make the future even more so: the only choice is between the models of the oligarchic (i.e., centrally fascist) warcamp and the open plebeian-democratic commune. The dominant current of capitalist economico-political power has clearly

embarked upon the constitution of a militarized Fortress Amerika and (less overtly, still centered mainly on police) Fortress Europe. Demented ventures such as the invasion of Iraq induce further group terrorism. If not stopped by focussed popular protest, these politics would grow into a permanent mutual legitimating of group and State terrorism.

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12 Poems of Old Age II (2005-10)

Aequinox

The victories and the defeat in the lowlands are behind us
The defeats and the victory in the highlands are before us
What we need today is embodied reason, and a caress.

13305

A Martial Epigram on Martians

Qui legis Oedipoden caligantemque Thyesten
Martial X.4

Why are you staring so raptly at Orcs and Elves
Why gulping down Conan, Potter & th'insufferable Lewis
What are to you galactic conquests, or what help
To your wasting lives the circenses of media clerics
Brainwashing the new imperial plebes?

Drink deep

What life shall recognize & call out "This is mine!"
Even if Aliens or dragons, the draught shall taste of us humans,
The ways we oppress & love each other, in what cave
Are we ourselves & how may we get out into the light
Of the blue Sun.

But no, mr. Jones, you don't want to
See yourself, cognize your killing cruelties: so at least
Read your Tolkien! You may shut the book & think
Why he loved cleansing wars.

26706

Cold Comfort (Intrumo)

Because of UKLG, again

In a dream a dragon came to me, looked at me,
 Splendour of shimmering copper scales
 & scarlet thorns, scythe-taloned. I looked
 Back, at the amber mist around his huge eyes, above

The fuming nostrils. The red-black smoke from her mouth
 Hissed: "Don't despair, short-lived Earthling. Soon
 You shall die, soon will expire your kind's cosmic contract.
 This muddled globe your Mother is unforgiving as our winds.

But in the new creation the Mother shall whelp, a few shards
 May be dug up & deciphered by successor populations,
 Hexapodes perhaps, stabler far, winged like ourselves:

A few testimonials, like the ones you found of Gilgamesh
 & Intrumo, shall show yours was a redeemable kind.
 >What a pity!< the unsentimental hexapods will chirrup,

Winging on to their inscrutable business of conviviality".
 26806

Ave Atque Vale

Martial X 47

These matters make for a happier life
 Or so i learned while night falls:

A work that you above all else love
 & which nourishes its wo/man, with some surplus;
 An apartment with two rooms of my own
 All full of books, large tables
 & a double bed; a woman friend
 & lover to lighten the common burdens
 So that between us rules sunlight & warmth;

Avoid quarrels but never stop rebelling
Against the blindfold on Justice's eyes;
Reasonable health, the little donkey that bears you
Thru life must be cosseted, watered, fed;
Some friends to talk with, on Internet
Yet sometimes see in flesh; simple food,
Meat thrice a week at best, tasty,
Not spiced, a glass of wine at night,
Heart-stopping sex, but after forty more rarely;
Sleep that knits up the ravelled care of day.

Do not cease, for this is life, from finding out
Just what you can do that makes sense
& where after no other gods:
so you can look
At your approaching end not fearing nor wishing it,
Having applied yourself as best as it went
To a bad job, a world ordered so badly,
A universe wondrously defying sense.

28706

Days—years—decades, where
Have they gone? This small
Wind trembling at my doorstep

241106

Pillaging the Gnostics

Et in hora mortis nostrae

See, i talk so that i may leave
I tell you what i heard & saw
In the leaves of grass in the drawn sweaty faces,
I teach you as i slowly learned it
I talk that i may leave this world
Where i never had enuf time
In peace.

I lived on Earth a short time, i didn't have time.
A short span of time. Pay attention
So you can hear me. If i came, who
May i be, may i have been, may
I have become? I drank the water of life
The water of pleasure. Now i advance toward
The water of forgetfulness.

Greetings to you, my sister & my brother!
Do not be so deathly afraid of sweet-gifting Venus,
Mother & lover, not yet known! I lived on Earth
A short time, i praised it, i suffered it.
I learned a little, i taught a little, a multitude
Of sisters, of companions, only
A few knew me,

I knew only a few, only little. I tell you
Disintoxicate yourself! Renounce your deadly path,
Walk on the Way which leads you to be free.
No Yahweh no kings to dominate, no masters
Except the Masters who know, so far as they know.
You are self-condemned, self-enchained. Renounce
Your chains.

You made for yourself a heavenly Lord and leader.
He turned around & enslaved you, shut
Your eyes & ears, raised up an inbred caste
Inimical to Justice & Knowledge, to Venus Of All People.
You turned to derision this house given unto you
As a heredity & a promise, it will be
Pulled down.

Only knowledge can unfold liberty, an
 Undying desire. Let this tree grow, so you may grasp
 The fruits of freedom. All of us possess
 A chip of knowledge, a teardrop of liberty
 Within ourselves. Do not let this pearl
 Drop into the viscous flow of arrested
 Time. Wake up

From the drugged dream of reason. Who
 Are you? Whose brother & sister are you?
 Where are you going? Do you judge all matters
 In order to be judged? O the anxiety of not reaching,
 Of reaching & not grasping! Do you see
 High Venus, star moving across resplendent skies?
 I tell you truly:

This is the hour of our death
 This is the cosmic hour of persecution
 This the hidden hour of our ignoble oblivion.
 You can live toward a good death or a bad death.
 Life is when two sexes are in each other as light
 Liberty, as amity. Thus we become citizens of
 Fair Earth, Heaven.

5-7307

Problem

próblema (from *pro-ballesthai*):
 protrusion, salience, project,
 foothills, bulwark, what is held or
 put before one, point at issue
 For SL

I am where i am not, & i am where i
 Literally do not want to be & yet
 Find no better place to be. This
 Protracted instant in which i am held
 Protruded projected thrown before one, myself.

A galley slave smoothing his rowing bench
 In memory of what was then, a salience,
 A bulwark. This is here, this is now.
 You are history.

I need a spy-glass to see the liberated festive
 Zones, floating worlds of woodcuts & songs,
 The magic ships trod by puppets quite like ourselves
 Who may meet what they awaited & do not turn
 Into brittle bubbles of glass, for they're puppets
 Our superior shadows, cast by the burning bush
 In the clear desert of the boards that mean life,
 Held or put before us, in the foothills,
 Touched by tongues of fire. O their arrow-ships!

He has a problem, said the voice
 He got the spyglass he wanted.

13307

Haecceitas (This Here & Now)

Things are there a this a shape
 Just such for this here & now
 Exposed no other in the light that they bathe
 The space that they are.

& i? Am i a thing or a looker-on?
 Both--and? & you too
 With this red hair & those green eyes
 That nose mouth breasts moist lap?
 Enter: here too are gods.

Bitter truth: we know we shall not be.
 Animals, more & less than.
 Things, more & less than. Forms that feel.

Warmth is a dissipative structure
 Yours smooth skin a miracle of negentropy
 The small adorable crow's-feet at your eyes
 Forerunners of tectonic crevasses drought
 The lap will bear children & desiccate
 It will not be. Yet things are there.

What is done has been done
 What is undone has been undone
 When they are redone it will not be this.
 Things are reversible but not for us.

Seize the shining day seize the fertile night
 Deep deep down the dark shore
 There-things and not-there non-things unreal
 Amid non-persons here there & everywhere
 I too am here now with you
 Athirst for justice unreconciled

My green essence:
 Psyche, Chloe.

12-211007

A Note to Myself: In the Ice-Age
(A Counter-project to Xiung Xi-ling)

All that we feel is the freezing storm
 But who is there to grieve for the warmth?
 As you're leaving, bequeath this wish:
 Everybody should afford happiness!

19408

Sonnet for Reinventing Tomorrow
(Reading Patraquim)

A slow step à la derive
 the way lost how does one make maps
 Athirst for a face to drink in
 another map of coloured stone stony

The prospect for a simple gesture of elegance
 inaugurating us the seventh day
 From dictionary the entries justice incarnate
 & you on the tornado shore

Yet the corrupt gods shaping us woe is me
 as we invented them overhead a roof
 The wrong solitude so common
 as gills in the sea apnoeic
 The hands that drove the rivers crazy
 unused useless today

2-4908

I seem insane to you. I'm not sorry.
 But tell me your reasons. "Because you go on
 About justice, because you were always bewitched
 By the Great Goddess." Indeed i do, indeed
 I was, i am. This folly, all ye gods
 & sea-nymphs, may it never leave me!

31109

O worries, labours, honours & small fame earned for duties well done
 Go, find successors to carry you, care for you
 A god calls me away, far from you. Having sailed
 The wide oceans, roamed from Rome to Tokyo & forth,
 My little skiff is now steered into a small haven,
 The rower will be dismissed, soon.

31109

Globalization (2008)*

The term GLOBALIZATION is notoriously imprecise, so that one scholar (Jean-Marie Guéhenno) has called it a symptom of the conceptual muddle of our epoch. However, it has become a powerful metaphor for the sense of ever increasing interconnection and interdependence between all parts of the world which were enabled by new productive forces, in particular the electronic and transport technologies. It represents a nominal process that added the suffix “-ization” (so it strictly means “rendering global”) to an adjective adopted by antonymy to, first, “universal or cosmopolitan,” which was part of the Enlightenment discourse, and second to “international,” which was part of the socialist-communist one. It superseded the Cold War division into the three “worlds”—the US-dominated, the Soviet-dominated, and the “non-aligned” or fought-over one. Virilio remarks that the term’s success comes at the time when “all true geopolitics is being neglected... [and] some military schools have ceased teaching geography” (30): the major powers do not have to know practically anything about any country that a military map doesn’t convey, it is enough to have a global financial market and satellite pinpointing for global bombing.

Globalization takes over from those earlier attempts at worldwide socioeconomic and political interdependencies both the positive side—the lessening of barriers to human contacts and to understanding (Kant’s “public use of reason” as against unvindicated authority)—and the negative side—the subservience of such advances to widening the gap of power between haves and havenots, the powerful and the powerless. I shall concentrate on the negative side, currently far more important, while not denying that positive aspects exist and might collaterally help enrich our lives. In my main sense, globalization may best be delimited as a process by which the multiplication, intensification, and speed-up of interactions between people are constituted into and determined by a single market. It spreads over the world and largely integrates it into one system of exploitative production and circulation dominated by the breathless ups and downs of capitalist finance. The process was ushered in by the European colonial conquests after the 16th century (when “terrestrial globes,” showing continents and then countries, first spread, and the planet Earth as a circumnavigable, unitary globe became an increasingly common image), which culminated in 19th-early 20th century imperialism. Reactions to its increasingly global “world wars”

* This overview is dedicated to the memory of my friend Raymond Williams, whom we’d need today more than ever. Except for a part of the last paragraph, it was written in August 2008, before the crash.

and crises by antagonists first from the Left and then from the Right, to which the capitalist answer was the Welfare and Warfare State, halted the process after 1917; it resumed full swing after the collapse of the USSR in 1989.

Globalization is an economic system based on ideological persuasion and political (including military) enforcement whose protagonists are the multinational or better transnational corporations (TNC). There were ca. 50 thousand such TNCs in the year 2000, but 200 of them dominate half of the global industrial output and more than half of the finances. Their head offices and profits remain however in a few metropolitan nations of North America and Europe, plus Japan and some in South Korea (142 of the 200 were based in USA, Japan, and Germany). Their beneficiaries are almost all the dominant classes of the present-day world. Globalization is most evident in the corporations' a) spreading out from natural resources into banking, industry, transport, utilities, and entertainment; b) dominating world trade in commodities and of investments, with few regulatory restrictions left (except for subventions in the North to some agricultural and textile products and quotas for cultural products—movies, TV programs—in some countries such as France and Canada). It should be underlined that trade in commodities is more restricted than investments, communication of information more than commodities, while displacement of people without ample means of subsistence (migration) is the most heavily regulated of all.

The main politico-economical tool of globalization is detaxation of capital, which leads to increased tax squeezes on middle and working classes and a radically lesser ability of State governments to direct their economies or provide public expenditure programs targeted to socially needful but not privately profitable improvement of people's lives in certain areas or social classes. A bountiful array of further economic tools comprises prominently the ending of all public controls on capital and "leveraged" speculation and on safeguarding workers' interests, as well as on instantaneous entry of big North Atlantic operators into almost all other financial systems (with the partial exception of China and a few other States). Any losses were fully paid for by poor people in the countries concerned, so that "austerity" programs became a very efficient form of transfer of revenues from poorer to richer classes and nations. The latest yearly OCSE report calculates that out of 3 billion working people 60% work without a formal contract or social security, while, partially overlapping this, a similar number of people live with less than \$2 per day, so that "nearly 2 billion people suffer from hunger."¹ The ratio of living standards between the richest and poorest countries,

¹ Worldwatch Institute: the estimate that nearly 3 billion people are much under the World Bank's optimistic 2 dollars per day poverty line is in Pogge 207.

which was a century ago about 10:1 is now over 80:1. Beside 99% of people in the impoverished countries, worst hit in the rest of the world are women, those no longer fully employed, the old, and the young. While the new order relies on States as enforcing intermediaries, the current wretched of the earth or proletarians are dispossessed from above, by supranational financial and political bodies, and often from below, by warlords, mafias, and other local “polyarchic” networks. This raises severe obstacles for accountability and democracy.

Support for such globalization comes not only from the metropolitan States of the North dominated by multinational corporations, for whom these practices are hugely profitable, but also from the rapidly growing international planning bureaucracy (IMF, WTO, World Bank, many NGOs, etc.) and from other domestic upper classes, while opposition may come from striking workers, peasants or other small producers who are threatened by the new order. Possibly unintended effects are the significant rise of cross-border smuggling of commodities, including drugs, gems, timber, arms, and indigent people (for conventional sweated labour and prostitution), that creates a large informal and in good part illegal trading system parallel to, though often intersecting with and feeding into, the system of fully legal large corporations. Other side-effects are a huge rise of migration from poorer to richer areas needing cheap labour, the accelerating degradation of global ecosystems for vertebrates (for example through rapid climate change), and multiplication of communication through internet and similar channels.

The quite indispensable cultural or ideological dimension of globalization spreads new norms and rules on the “North Atlantic” or “McWorld” model through market integration by means of global consumer brands and advertisement (everywhere, but mostly in the new media beginning with satellite TV). Its new treatment of work and income makes for a new mode of life, characterized by lack of security, haste, ruthless competition, and aiming at profits *now* or, for the less rich, aiming at a multiplicity of low-paid and intermittent employments (cf. Rifkin). This transforms the horizons and aspirations of many people, especially the young, inflecting them towards conspicuous consumption as the ultimate social value. The effect is twofold: in most cases it reduces the appeal of nationalism and established religions. However, in some cases established or rising elites attempt a response to globalizing deterritorialization by calling upon such “traditional,” but in fact reinvented values (religious fundamentalism, or reterritorializing wars—scf. for the latter Kaldor, also Suvin, “Sulle ‘nuove guerre’” and Duffield). The dislocations and highly increased vulnerability of women,

workers, the youth, plus small producers and peripheral areas, may also produce political oppositions such as the “Seattle people” or some Latin American governments (see the overview in Brand, also Lipietz, Gowan, Rosenberg, Kapstein, and Stiglitz).

The world is today one of overlapping communities of fate, where major issues, such as security against armed violence, drugs, disease and (last but not least) economico-financial ravages, can no longer be divided into domestic and foreign. The sanguine “neoliberal” view of globalization shared by most international financial institutions and States is opposed by the “durable disorder” interpretation (Duffield), that most independent observers find more convincing: “[G]lobalization has not succeeded in reducing poverty, neither has it succeeded in ensuring stability” (Stiglitz 6). They agree that globalization increases destruction of environment, inequality, marginalization, dire poverty and criminal opportunities both inside a single country and within the widening North-South gap, while it is unclear whether it generally favours at least parliamentary democracy (the evidence suggests in a few cases yes and in others no). It seems safe to conclude with Barber: “Market fundamentalism has done little for democracy. It disdains democratic regulation with dogmatic conviction and is as enamored in its own way of global anarchy as the criminal syndicates and terrorist rings it opposes” (159). A whole wing of Western scholars has by now concluded that the social failure of “neoliberal” globalizing policies to deliver equitable economic development and life-standards to the greater part of the globe (e.g., the hugely growing unemployment and under-employment) is a major structural cause of State failure, leading to both endemic—sometimes pandemic—violence and the rapidly multiplying wars over the last 20 years (Callinicos, Cerny, Chesnais, Chossudovsky, Cooper, Cornia, Fitzgerald et al., George, Gilpin, Gowan, Gray, Kurtenbach & Lock, Lundberg et al., Rodrik, Rosenberg, Rugman, Saul, Singer & Wildawsky, Stewart, Wade, Wang, Willett, and so on).

Thus, “globalization is a continuation of violence by new means” (McGrew 16). Furthermore, as an economic system globalization hinges on the consolidation of a worldwide cheap-labour economy on the one hand and the search for new consumer markets on the other, where the former, ironically, undermines the latter.

Finally, this leads to the term of “globalization” being sometimes shunned because of its negative implications, as exemplified by the reference to Barber and by Derrida’s observation that globalization may refer to the globe but not to the (human) world: “the concept of world gestures toward a history, it has a memory that distinguishes it from that of the globe.... For the world begins by designating... a certain oriented

history of human brotherhood..." (374-75). Still, no alternative has yet emerged. If we are stuck with globalization, then we must radically inflect it with brotherhood—starting with a chance for survival by all.

Addition 2009: However, the imperative necessity of an overall control of global relations of production and finance by substantive democratic input from below—including the dismantling of “structural unemployment” and structural starvation, and a radical diminution of oil-based energy consumption as in automobiles—has grown quite urgent. According to the UN Human Development Report of 2002, the world’s richest 1% have grabbed as much income as the poorest 57%. So what is needed is not primarily saving the guilty bankers and their bankrupt banks but massive investments in accessible homes, health services, pensions, school systems (the US subprime indebtment was started to pay for these!). The only way to make such investments democratically and with lasting effect is for masses of ordinary people to reacquire the alienated powers of policy-making, especially in macroeconomic matters, nationally and internationally. Delaying this by throwing more taxpayers’ money into the abysses of financial speculation bodes ill for the very fabric of civil society.

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**Thus Spake the Bitter Muse:
Do Not Profit by the Blood of your Fellows!
(A Pastiche)**

— With thanks to Rich Erlich —

With filial greetings to *Tanakh* prophets, who believed the only copyright resides in the voice that speaks to and through them all.

The words of the Assembler of Sayings, one of the defrocked ones in the lineage of Benjamin. The word of the Muse our Lady came to him in the days of rebellious Mazdak the Liberator, and throughout the days of betrayal and ruin when Mazdak was killed and of the murderous Warring States, and until the crash of the Great Plague coming from above by the power of evil and its followers, when Jerusalem went into exile and the Assembler too died.

—And the Muse looked frowningly at him, and said, What are you doing?
Don't you see how they profit by the blood of your fellows?

—O Muse my goddess and lady,
Have pity upon me! How have I
Offended you? I have not sat
In the company of revellers and drugged away
My brains, I have not been an oppressor.
I have sat lonely because of your hand upon me
For you have opened my eyes
& it has filled me with gloom.
Why must my pain go on, my wound
Fester open, no healing in sight?
You have been to me like a delightful spring
That fails, water to quench my thirst
That cannot be relied upon.

I have spoken to your people
As i knew, not precisely enough,
& now i am too old.
O Muse, my strength and my stronghold,
My beauty and my desire,
My refuge in long days of trouble,

I am like a tamarack in the desert
That does not sense the coming of good,
I am set in the scorched wilderness place
In a barren land without a human face.
I am hungry & thirsty,
Harvest is past
Summer is gone
Grapes have ripened
Autumn is gone
But we have not been saved.
Because my people are shattered i am shattered
I am dejected, seized by desolation.

My heart is crushed within me,
All my bones are trembling.
Is there no balm in aesthetics?
Can no physician be found?
When one is found, why is he straightway
Killed? Why has no healing
Come to my poor people?

O to be in the desert
At an oasis, a caravanseraï for the weary,
O to leave my people
To go away from them
To cultivate a little garden
& not be afraid.
For they whore after Mammon
Drink bloodlust with the Lord of the Hosts,
Their running is wickedness
Their straining is iniquity
A band of rogues,
They kill, lie & destroy:
They advance from evil to greater evil,
& they do not heed You, Lady,

They profit by the blood of their fellows.

— Verily, *thus spake the bitter Muse*,
Do not be afraid, O mortal, for
You shall die as all flesh,
You have no advantage over animals,

Nothing worse can happen to you but
To die badly having lived badly.
So do not say "I am too old,"
& do not say "I am not worthy."
I have made of you my spokesman
& you stand before me. If you produce
What is needed out of the dark times
You shall be pleasing & i shall be pleased.
For i set before you the way of life
& i set before you the way of death

& the Muse put out her gracious hand and touched my mouth and my forehead, and she said to me:

See I appoint you as my Speaker
To the classes & empires,
To ignorant sweaty faces
Of lean people gulping down beer
& to devious rat faces
Of obese people swilling bourbon.
Go tell the truth of abomination
That my people may overthrow the violent
In self-defence, lest even worse befall,
Call them to destroy & to build,
To uproot & to plant.

Verily, *said the embittered Muse*,
They bend their tongues like bows
& shoot poisoned word arrows
Thru a thousand thousand loudspeakers.
They have trained themselves to falsify pictures
Through a thousand thousand screens.
Their words are used to deceive
Their brains are used to spread plagues.
Their might is great and conscience nil
They are famous in the world
For treachery not honesty,
For lying not professing truth.

And the Muse said, Because they forsook the teaching I had sent them
by poets & prophets, because they did not follow the Word but their own
covetous hearts and Mammon and the Lord of the Hosts, as their fathers
had taught them, verily, i am going to feed people wormwood & make

them drink a bitter draft. Tornadoes tsunamis & volcanic eruptions shall
be as nothing to what i see them doing to each other, wearing top hats and
spats, quoting competing Sacred Scriptures in black or white coats.
From the battlefields and the stock-markets
Disaster shall break loose upon all the denizens
Of what was a fair planet.
Each speaks to his fellow in friendship
But lays an ambush in his heart.
Every man beware of his friend!
Every woman beware of her man!
Trust not even a brother or sister,
Unless they defend against the violent.

For the mountains I am weeping,
For the pastures in the wilderness I sing a dirge,
They're laid waste, they are sere,
& no birds sing. Beasts & fish &
Birds of the sky have been & are gone.
I weary of this failed animal Homo
I send some of you as a final warning
This is your Last Chance Saloon,

Do not profit by the blood of your fellows!

And the angered Muse spake to me again and said: What do you see?
I replied:

—I have been shown a system that is a seesaw,
An arrested balance going nowhere in a hurry,
& those up are kept by those down,
They worship mental sloth & Mammon,
Violence and the Lord of the Hosts,
Not the loving caress of the Goddess.

—*And she said to me:* You have seen right,
For I am watchful to have you say the right.
So prepare yourself, arise & speak to them,
All that i tell you to.
Do not break down before them
Lest i break you before them.
I make you today a scapegoat,
An otter & a masked rider,
A prism & a telescope,

A pirate against kings & officers
 A raider against priests and bureaucrats.
 They will attack the truth-tellers,
 Jail them, torture them, kill them
 By thousands: Rosa Lev Che Antonio...
 Ah i lack time for all the names
 But they shall not overcome
 For i am with you, though many die
(Declared the Muse & Goddess)
 To see whether your species can be saved
 For it hasn't played out its melody.

Your people of renown & leaders,
 Your great academics who should know better,
 Have not asked themselves "Where is the Lady,
 Great Mistress of gods and of mortals?"
 The guardians of the teaching ignored me,
 & the prophets prophesied by Mammon
 In Malibu mansions & Park Avenue homes.
 The rich who rule defy & hate me,
 Those with obese devious faces
 Or svelte in bodies only much money can buy
 Drove furiously on the road to the crash
 Pushing toxic trades with the speed of light.
 The leaders of their cyborg armies
 Consorted with the Beast of Abomination
 Coolly looking at the rivers of blood
 From their heights. O i will go on
 Accusing you (*said the Goddess*):
 My humans have exchanged bitter medicine
 For cancer wrapped in sweet images.
 Be appalled, O heavens, at this
 Be horrified, utterly dazed!

Verily, *said the bitter Goddess*,
 I shall put stumbling blocks before these people
 Over which they shall stumble,
 Fathers & daughters alike
 Mothers & sons alike
 Neighbour & friend shall perish
 Even my prophets shall perish
 So that the planet may be cleansed.

I am putting my words into your mouth as fire
 If these people remain obdurate, they shall be
 Firewood, & consumed:

Do not profit by the blood of your fellows!

— & *i prepared myself, apprehensive*
But not too afraid, and said,
 O foolish people, clever only
 At cheating, while you are cheated,
 You have eyes but cannot see
 You have ears but cannot hear!
 From the greatest down to the smallest
 You are all greedy for profit
 Ooze semen at 200%,
 Priest & prophet act falsely,
 The rich & the scribe speak falsely.

You boast of healing the people
 Saying “All is well, all is well”
 When nothing at all is well.
 You have acted shamefully
 But do not feel shame
 & cannot be made to blush.
 Your ears are blocked by greed & filth,
 Your eyes are blinkered by the lust for dominion.
 Hear & see:
 The Lady’s word has been spoken
 But for you it is an object of scorn
 You wilfully turn away. But I am
 Filled with the wrath of the High One,
 I cannot hold it to myself.

Pour it on the infant texting SMS in the street,
 On the company of youths in the discotheque!
 Men & women alike shall go under,
 Elders in asylum, babes in the crib,
 Their homes shall go up in flames
 Their fields shall turn to mud,
 They shall stumble when the Goddess
 Raise fires & floods against them.

Consider the ancient ways:
What is the road to happiness?
Travel it, find peace for yourselves
& peace for this ravelled globe.
But they said "We will not," for they were afraid,
Freedom was disorder & production murder.
Hear well, nations,
Simplicity is too difficult for you
The end of your schemes is disaster.
Let your misfortune rebuke you
Let your affliction reprove you
Mark well how bitter it is
To forsake the Way of the Lady.

How can you say "I am not corrupt
I haven't gone a-whoring after Mammon's Banks
I haven't supped with the ravening Lord of the Hosts"?
Look at your million-fold crimes in Iraq & Palestine,
Consider how you destroyed my people of Yugoslavia
Bombing Beograd worse than the Nazi Stukas
Killing brotherhood as brothers killed brothers,
How you starved my first-born of Africa
Like a hyena crunching bones of cadavers
Snuffling at the wind in her eagerness
Whose passion cannot be restrained.

Like a thief chagrined when he is caught
So are the speculators chagrined when their stocks crash
So are the demagogues when wars are over.
Where is Mammon in your hour of calamity?
Let him arise & save you if he can!
Let the Lord Who Destroys also produce justice!
Your garments are drenched
With the lifeblood of the poor
You ravage continents like a meteorite megacrash
Drown tens of thousands in immigrant boatloads,
O wasting generation, hear the word of the Lady:

Do not profit by the blood of your fellows!

—& now, *said the bittersweet Goddess,*

I shall make you an assayer of my people
A refiner of the earth of which they are made.
You saw how the bellows puffed mightily,
How the lead was consumed by fire,
Yet the smelter smelted to no purpose,
The dross was not separated out,
I shall reject this base metal.
They are copper & tin, stubborn & defiant,
They deal basely & act corruptly.

You who build your house upon injustice
& your corporation upon exploitation
Of nature & your fellows, you who work the needy
For profit taken from their living labour,
Who think "I built me vast palaces
With spacious penthouses on the ninetieth floor
Provided with platinum & mahogany
Painted by the most expensive of painters,"
Do you think you are any nobler
Because you compete in mahogany
Because you eat off gold
Because you show off ebony or alabaster
Because you buy art by meter or ton?

Can the capitalist change his lust for profits
Or the leopard and hyena their spots?
Just so much can those do good
Practiced in the arts of doing evil!
If you eat & drink simply
Ply a loving justice
Stop polluting brains & braes,
All will be well on any floor.
If you do not, you shall have
The burial of an ass, dragged out,
Lying outside the gates of Jerusalem,
A broken pot upon the midden,
A smashed vessel regarded by no one.

Is Man a serf, a slave?
Why is she given over to plunder?
Wild beasts have roared over him
Hyenas raised their cachinnations

Her land has been made a waste
His cities desolate & polluted.
China India & United Europe
Jostle in the selfsame darkness.
How high is the price you are paying
For leaving the ways of justly living
Which I showed you through earlier anointed—
That what there is shall belong
To those who are good for it:
Work to the workers,
Learning to those learning,
Children to the motherly
Communism to the poets,
& poetry to every wo/man.

If you do not accept correction
You will be destroyed.
I will scatter you like straw
That flies before the simoom.
This shall be the portion of justice,
The proper measure you shall receive.
Send for the dirge-singers, let them come,
Quickly start a wailing for Humanity,
Summon the skilled women, let them come,
That your eyes may run with water,
Your ears hear lamentations. For death
Is climbing through your windows,
Entering your fortresses of torture,
Flying with the missile-toting bombers—

DO NOT PROFIT BY THE BLOOD OF YOUR FELLOWS!

Communism and Yugoslavia: Prolegomena for a Discussion

The hell of the living is not something future; there is one, it is already present, we live it every day, we shape it together. There are two ways to avoid its suffering. One seems easy for many: to accept hell and participate in it to the point of not seeing it any more. The second is risky, it asks for continuous attention and learning: to search for and know how to recognize who and what, amidst hell, is not hell, and to make it last, and to give it space.

Italo Calvino, *Le città invisibili*, 1972

Howbeit doubtless, Master More (to speak truly as my mind gives me) wheresoever possessions be private, where money bears all the stroke [has all the influence], it is hard and almost impossible that there the weal public may justly be governed, and prosperously flourish. Unless you think thus: that justice is there executed, where all things come into the hands of evil men; or that prosperity there flourishes, where all is divided among a few; ...and the residue live miserably, wretchedly, and beggarly.

Thomas More, *Utopia* Book I, orig. 1516

1. Notes on Communism while Reading Brecht

What are we talking about when we say *Communism*, how can we begin making sense of it? First of all, we would have to unpack the term. The chthonic roots of communism are, no doubt, in the cry of suffering and of indignation that accompanies class society as its dark twin, in the deepest desires for the reversal and subversion of such an “inverted world” of injustice. In that sense it is as immortal as that society; when repressed, it spreads out as a subterranean rhizome. However, the plant itself begins to appear and be analyzable only when the cry is organized. Organized or articulated communism can be *a locus*, *an orientation for a movement*, and *a horizon*. Each of these somehow implies and needs the other two: a consubstantial trinity, each of whose members may yet

be approached and used independently for some purposes and in some situations.

Communism as *horizon* is the future Earthly Paradise of a classless society, a society where oppositions will not be dealt with antagonistically, through murder and hunger: not by pistol but by pencil, as Brecht says in the nearest approximation to it he allowed himself to pen, the Prologue to the *Caucasian Chalk Circle* (which also sketches the ideal role of the intellectual as keeper of collective historical memory for crucial present discussions in Arkadi Cheidze, the Singer-presenter of the play). As all horizons, it is orienting, often inspiring, and always unattainable, for it moves with the viewer and pursuer oriented toward it. As long as there is such a pursuer, the horizon cannot be extinguished.

Communism as *locus* is any real society proposing to be largely or even asymptotically utopian or non-antagonistic (harmonious, as the Chinese “Communist” Party hypocrites today say)—that is, radically reducing exploitation and ignorance, developing equality of rights and opportunities (justice) for all. It could be, as Marx, Lenin, Gramsci, Brecht and all classical socialists and communists believed, a first absolutely necessary step towards a disalienated life of people in a community. However, this holds IF (and only if) it, a) was not stifled by poverty and aggression, and b) did not pretend to be the oxymoron of a finally reached horizon, an illusion that also necessarily grows into a religion and a lie (Nietzsche can be used here, as Brecht certainly used him). This locus existed in partial and always endangered ways in the first years after the Soviet, the Yugoslav, the Chinese, and probably the Vietnamese Revolutions; I believe it still exists, in most threatened and stifled ways, in Cuba. Yet most unfortunately, as a rule it soon became a façade for class struggles between a new class formation, an oligarchy developing inside the elite Party politocracy, and the working people: in the USSR after ca. 10 years, Yugoslavia and China ca. 15 years. Since the imperfect attempts of Trotsky and Mao to “fire on the headquarters” failed, the communist locus was finally destroyed by a combination of relentless outside capitalist pressure and inner hollowing out or corruption.

Today, bereft of locus, we still might have (if we don’t lose the faith) the *orientation*, a vector leading from our quite dystopian and catastrophic locus of capitalist barbarism towards the utopian horizon (in the positive sense of a critical eutopia, *pace* Engels). Orientation means, etymologically, turning toward the Orient of the rising Sun, the source of light and warmth, indeed of all life. Orientation toward a communist horizon is that subspecies of Brecht’s central category of bearing (*Haltung*), which is proper to us as his political—philosophical

and poetical — followers.¹ It would be of a piece with Brecht's permanent eager receptivity to better ways of thinking: maybe it's naivety we need as a tool? Maybe sympathy too? Let's try it out and see.

This orientation is today our minimum requirement, without which all talk of communism should cease. But for a proper collective orientation, that is, a *movement* with this orientation, we need a cultural revolution. This means many things, but to begin with at least two: a rebuilding on the basis of an updated Marx for a Post-Fordist (Einsteinian, cybernetic, etc.) age and amid a most dangerously rotting capitalism; as well as a clear idea how to organize, that is, what to take from Lenin and what not. Anarchism, noble as it is in many ways in people like Kropotkin, and with which we should practice fraternal solidarity in its radical refusal of any oppression, will get us nowhere: as we have seen in these last 10 years from Seattle and Genova on. So let us examine what might be useful.

2. *What Does This Orientation Mean for Us Today?*

The communist orientation means the self-preservation of humanity and its ecology, to be reached through radical self-determination on all levels, by means of peace and disalienated labour. To be or not to be, that is the question.

The ills of capitalism were for the last 40 years mainly hidden out of sight in slums of the North and the far-off South of the world. True, poets and thinkers in contact with the exploited masses have always warned us, in the words of Césaire (not to expatiate here upon Lenin), that this is a decaying civilization which cannot cope either with the metropolitan or with the colonial dispossessed or proletariat. These ills and dangers are now growing obvious and all-pervasive: very few people from the middle class, already mainly reduced to dependency, from young people, reduced to precarious begging for crumbs, even from middle management and the great majority of scientists, will be spared. Capitalism has greatly furthered the destruction of all qualities, the capillary barbarization and alienation of all areas of daily life, including science and the arts; and quantitatively, a direct and indirect reduction of life-span among the overwhelming numbers of the world's impoverished or outright killing of millions through immiseration and wars (and attendant evitable illnesses). On the horizon are further dirty wars, with unchecked use of uranium and phosphorus weapons,

¹ See on Brecht's central term of "Haltung" (bearing, stance) much more in my two essays below, and on the preceding mention of Engels, my "'Utopian'."

possibly nuclear ones too, and a US war against China is not excluded in the future. Quite certainly, today's young will live to see an ecological collapse in a few decades: its symptoms are already among us. These ills are not only horrendous, worse than anything even degenerate communist loci brought about, but also systemic: they flow out of the central and all-consuming urge of capitalism for vampiric maximization of profit and cannot be reformed.

But why not call the alternative "socialism"? As Saussure taught us, all designations are sociohistorically arbitrary; but some are less arbitrary than others. The corruption of partly and potentially communist loci means that the very terms of socialism and communism became a cover-up for increasing repression of impulses from the people and for inefficiency, and are by now sullied by such horrendous abuse. Indeed, socialism might seem to have an advantage, as it could be associated with clearly beneficent changes in, say, the Scandinavian societies or post-1945 Britain. But these have not only been wiped out, but also turned out to be cover-ups for imperialist dominion and warmongering, exporting killings out of sight. So to my mind, as far as historical record or opprobrium goes, there is nothing to choose between socialism and communism. The difference that leads me to prefer the latter as the name for our final horizon is the greater potential fertility of the term, based on its greater philosophical depth. Communism is the only radical—that is, systemic—alternative to, the only counter-system able to face up to capitalism. Socialism means either a halfway house, or wishy-washy compromise with no lasting consequence in order to prevent radical revolution.

However, what the movements and eventually liberated loci on the road to a communist horizon will call themselves seems to me a tactical question best left to the concrete contingencies.

3. An Approach to What We Should Try to Salvage from SFR Yugoslavia

I am too ignorant, especially of economics, to pass a substantial judgment on the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (1943-91), brought about by the Communist Party, led by Josip Broz Tito, in the liberation struggle against fascism and its collaborators. I can only talk about some lessons to be drawn from its furthest horizons. I see three nodes for any such judgment: Party vs. civil society; federation vs. confederation; independence and foreign policy. One could also call the first point class struggles, the second point national, and the third point international relations. They seem *prima facie* central.

However I am here able to contribute some observations only on the first, to my mind crucial node. This may be a proper beginning, as the eventual, much exaggerated drift to a semi-confederation (I agree here with Močnik, 141) was due to the same combination of abstract utopianism and Party narcissism which I shall approach in 3.2 below. As to the third node, an independent foreign policy geared to international peace, it is so clearly to be desired that I'm not analyzing it further than my mention in the interview with Pulig cited at the end. But I have first to clear up the preliminary point of "democracy."

3.1. *Democracy.* Almost universal lip-service is today paid to democracy. But the crucial question seems to me *how is democracy institutionalized*, that is, permitted to operate. The genus democracy, "rule by the people," has as its main species representative democracy, associational democracy, and direct democracy.

Representative democracy is the species favoured by the bourgeoisie (when it does not prefer absolutism or direct dictatorship), and therefore the most frequent one. In it, (the) people are supposed to rule through representatives, typically elected within territorial districts. It allows alternative teams for and variants of capitalist exploitation of labour to spell each other without radical change, yet with some input from people on secondary but sometimes important modalities. The change of teams administering the State allows for some welcome relief in "kicking the rascals out" (latest example: Obama vs. Bush Jr.). However, when the system allows for major private financing of electoral campaigns in a two-party system, capitalist interests will practically own the parliament and the executive bodies supposed to regulate them.

Associational democracy is less present in the news but at least as important. In it various kinds of collective organizations—for example labour unions, co-operatives or business associations—directly engage in aspects of political decision-making: through involvement in government commissions, through various "corporatist" forms, through organizational representation on regulatory agencies, etc. (see Cohen and Rogers). But its contribution to democracy in the interest of (the) people depends on the internal democracy of the associations themselves.

In direct democracy, citizens are directly involved in the activities of political governing. One of its forms is a plebiscite or referendum, where citizens vote on various proposed laws or policies, and which has become a favourite tool for supplementing a failing representative or parliamentary democracy. But more important is significant popular empowerment when real decision-making authority and resources are given to popular councils of various sorts.

This last form was, as Buden rightly notes, the root form of democracy in Yugoslavia from 1941 on in the guise of People's Liberation Councils (Narodno-oslobodilački odbori, NOO), which continued functioning on the local level. This was "the revolutionary democratic idea of Councils" (54-55), common or "organic" to all popular uprisings from time immemorial to the Soviets of Trotsky and Lenin (sadly emasculated after ca. 1921) and on to Hungary in 1956 or Argentina in the 1990s. Classically, it includes a binding mandate and the possibility of recall upon petition by a reasonable fraction of electors, thus diminishing considerably chances that the powerful and rich could corrupt Council members away from wishes of people.

Favouring both associational and direct democracy as against capitalist-ruled representative democracy is the first lesson that could be learned from at least the best tradition of the SFRY and its clearly popular and democratic coming about. *Self-determination is even today our furthest horizon.* (This prominently includes, but is not limited to, economic *self management*.)

3.2. *Class Struggles: Leading Party vs. Civil Society.* I am interested centrally in the class struggles in SFRY. They were about the growing appropriation of surplus labour by the Party politocracy, but I shall here deal only with the real and potential roles of the Communist Party (under its various names) and of civil society or organized citizenry.

As I noted at the end of my interview with Pulig, one, and possibly *the*, major failing of Leninist practice was the undialectical denial of the quintessential need for any society to openly manifest and resolve its inevitable conflicts, which is usually called politics. Let me underscore that this gaping failure was quite at odds with the splendid horizon in Lenin's *State and Revolution*, his bold and radical arrow of power going from the working masses upwards and dispensing with the State apparatus. In Rancière's terms, this was a resolute orientation toward politics not the police. Since Lenin himself was forced, by the struggle for naked survival in the Civil War and hunger from 1918 on, to insist on building up a strong State apparatus, this is nowadays usually forgotten, and yet remains the furthest horizon of an ideal communist politics of direct democracy (Russia had little tradition of associational democracy beyond the peasant *mir*, extolled by Marx, and Lenin underestimated associations). In fact, Lenin cited approvingly (with minor formal cavils) Pannekoek's formulation: "The struggle of the proletariat is not only one against the bourgeoisie *for* State power; it is also a struggle *against* the power of the State.... The proletarian revolution consists in the annihilation of the State's instruments of power, in their dissolution (*Auflösung*) into the proletariat's instruments of power" (*The State* 134).

The total oblivion of this horizon in the USSR was due to increasing Stalinist despotism. In the SFRY it was partly due to abstract utopianism, believing the revolution solves all conflicts forever, while it in fact solves the crucial one for a given period only to open up immediately other, new ones. Partly it was an ideological overestimation of the permanent purity of the leading Party, issuing in self-interested clinging to power and eventually in a repressive elite divorced from the people. There was lots of “politicking” in the SFRY but as a rule behind closed doors, initiated by leading groups in power at the centre (later increasingly in the capitals of the federal republics).

The contradiction between proletarian mass power and Party power is traditionally phrased in terms of Luxemburg vs. Lenin. Rosa Luxemburg believed the central role in any revolution (and after it) should be borne by the spontaneous movement of the proletarian masses. Vladimir Lenin believed only a tightly organized, democratically run but centralized leading party could bring about the revolution and the reorganization of life after it. However, both positions grew less dogmatic with experience, that is after 1905 and 1917. Luxemburg eventually approached the idea of a leading party, and her failure to get there ten years before 1914 contributed, perhaps decisively, to her defeat and murder. Lenin grew less dogmatic about some of his early assumptions and embraced wholeheartedly “Soviet power,” though he committed the fatal error of forbidding factions inside the Party at the 1921 congress (only for one year, he thought...). This convergence between our two major paragons is interesting because I would postulate that the SFRY experience shows how “the blocking of a social conflict is always the prelude to a catastrophe” (a general observation by the splendid Cortesi, 151)—that is, how *both civic pressure groups from society at large and a co-ordinating central and centralized power agency* are necessary for a modern society. For modern, truly radical democracy to exist, forceful and enforced guarantees of associational and individual rights are necessary; and though Lenin promulgated a charter of “civic freedoms,” the suspicion of civic pressure groups has remained a crucial, often shameful, weak point of Bolshevik tradition. Instead of nurturing such groups, the SFRY Party/State always marginalized and sometimes repressed them—even if less crudely than in the “Soviet bloc” or China. The turn to oligarchy, begun in the 1960s and intensified after the failure to draw lessons from 1968 and 1971, can be even formally followed by the failure to generalize self-management from the basic OURs [Organizations of Associated Labour] to all levels of political decision-making at the expense of bourgeois (or even worse, Soviet) parliamentarism. This made of self-management largely a sham instead of an integration factor. It eventually

doomed the social dialectics and brought about unmitigated ideological, economic, and finally political disaster. Ideologically, the descent into disaster began with the failure to recognize and conceptualize new forms of class struggle—not necessarily radically antagonistic, that is, not insoluble—in a “socialist” society, on condition that there is real economical democracy (including planning) from below upward as well as from up downward, a feedback:

	A) Plan	B) Market
1) From lower classes upward	<i>Communism (Marx)</i>	<i>Early Capitalism</i>
2) From upper classes downward	<i>Welfare/Warfare State</i>	<i>19th century Capitalism</i>

What kind of State was the SFRY? This remains to be discussed. Marx held that in socialism as a first phase, “the narrow bourgeois horizon of right,” that is, bourgeois law, is not yet transcended. As Lenin glossed this, “with (semi-bourgeois) rights the (semi-bourgeois) State does not fully disappear either” (*Marxism* 32). Thus I would call it at best a semi-socialist or semi-communist State, that is, a compromise zigzagging between elements of A1 to A2 (and after the 1960s-70s, increasingly hollowed out by B2), but this was an unheard-of advance in the Balkans.

What was, to my feeling, lacking in SFRY? Many things; but first of all, the insight that history does not cease and that, indeed, in the accelerations of modern technology and ideology it is absolutely necessary to embrace a permanent cultural revolution, a permanent criticism and self-criticism as revision and modification but not abandonment of the communist horizons. Had this been heeded, it would have, among other matters, brought about the chance for a political collective which could have both accommodated autonomous communist intellectuals within the Cause and argued for a further liberation of labour (the two are connected). Then indeed we could have gotten back to Brecht’s “Praise of the Party” (“Lob der Partei”): “We are her” (A1).

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Ausklang: My Lady Hope

To the memory of Anne McLaren, 1948 onward

I dreamt of Lady Hope tonight
She smiled on me so sweetly,
Fair as in days of our keen youth
When she kissed me very sweetly.

“Where did you go, my Lady, my love,
What countries saw your features?
Your flaming gaze, your sunburnt hands,
Your reach to other futures?”

“I’ve always been here, young man of mine,
Here where the wise can see me,
You grew up and lost your keen eye
& the faint are not able to see me.”

“We all must grow up, my Lady, my love,
How can I again see you?”
“Remember how knowledge led you to love,
Hold fast to that, & you’ll see me.”

“But you’re no longer a girl, my love,
Rosy as dawn & eyes shining.”
“We all grow up, old man of mine,
I’m a woman now, eyes shining.”

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*E. Two Bibliographies of
Darko Suvin's Works by Himself*

Bibliography A:

Addition to the “Checklist of Printed Items that Concern SF (with Utopian Fiction or Utopianism, and a Few Bordering Items)” in *Learning from Other Worlds: Estrangement, Cognition and the Politics of Science Fiction and Utopia*. Ed. Patrick Parrinder. Liverpool: Liverpool UP, 2000, & Durham: Duke UP, 2001, 272-290.

This chronological bibliography of secondary literature by Darko Suvin up to 1998 was numbered from 1 to 179, while reprints and translations were indicated by small alphabet letters under each number regardless of chronology. Below, you will find the corrections and additions to it, by page number/ item number/ line (errors in spelling, especially the Croatoserbian diacritic letters, are not corrected; MY NOTES ARE IN CAPS, while the actual bibliographic information is not). Fragmentary reprints in handbooks or anthologies are omitted. The information is as complete as I could manage.

275/ 30-34/ 2: Nesvadb SHOULD BE Nesvadba

276/ 37/ NEW AFTER L. 6:

37b In no. 209, Ajdačić ed. 2009. [Y].

37c In Wegner ed. 2011. [This book].

276/ 38/ L. 10: NEW ITEM

38g [s.l.]: Editorial ATE, 1981 [Spanish].

276/ 39/ AFTER L. 4:

39d In no. 209, Ajdačić ed. 2009. [Y].

39e In Wegner ed. 2011. [This book].

276/ 40/ 6 AND AFTER: NEW ITEMS

40e: New York: Berkeley, 1976. [paperback reprint of *Solaris*]
OLD ITEM 40e NOW BECOMES 40f.

40g In Brazilian edn, Circulo do livro in the 1980s.

40h In no. 209, Ajdačić ed. 2009. [Y].

277/ 44/ L. 9: NEW ITEM 44f. See no. 60d.

277/ 45/ 3: Naucne fantastika SHOULD BE Naučna fantastika.

277/ 45/ AFTER L. 6:

45e In James Gunn and Matthew Candelaria eds., *Speculations on Speculation*. Lanham MD: Scarecrow P, 2005.

45f In no. 209, Ajdačić ed. 2009. [Y].

278/ 50/ NEW L. 5: 50c THERE IS ALSO A TURKISH TRANSLATION OF ITEM 50, BUT I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO OBTAIN A COPY OF IT.

- 278/ 51/ NEW L. 5:
 51e In James Gunn and Matthew Candelaria eds., *Speculations on Speculation*. Lanham MD: Scarecrow P, 2005.
- 278/ 52/ NEW L. 4:
 52b In Suvin no. 211, *Defined....*
- 279/ 60/ NEW L. 5:
 60d “En översikt över sovjetisk science-fiction.” *Summa* no. 1 (Jan. 1975): 13-23. [Splicing in no. 44; Swedish]
- 279/ 60/ NEW L. 6:
 60e *Proxima* [København] no. 47/48 (1989), [Danish].
- 280/ 81/ NEW L. 4:
 81c In Suvin no. 211, *Defined....*
- 281/ 94/ 3: SHOULD READ [Includes or subsumes no’s 44, 47, 51, 52, 53, 109, 61, 82, 63, 70, 64].
- 281/ 103/ 1: Hasselblat SHOULD BE Hasselblatt.
- 282/ 94/ NEW AFTER L. 10:
 94i *Metamorfoze znanstvene fantastike*. Zagreb: Profil, 2010.
 94j CHINESE TRANSL. FORTHCOMING FROM Anhui Publ.
- 283/ 106/ NEW L. 7:
 106d *Proxima* [København] no. 47/48 (1989), [Danish].
- 283/ 109/ AFTER L. 4:
 109d *Proxima* [København] no. 49 (1989). [Danish].
 OLD L. 5 SHOULD BE RENUMBERED AS 109e.
 109f In no. 209, Ajdačić ed. 2009. [Y].
 109g In Suvin, no. 211, *Defined....*
- 284/ 142/ NEW L. 10:
 142e In no. 209, Ajdačić ed. 2009. [Y].
- 284/ 144/ NEW L. 5:
 144d In no. 209, Ajdačić ed. 2009. [Y].
- 284/ 145/ NEW L. 3:
 145b *IF* [Carrara] 2.3 (marzo 2010): 29-35. [Italian].
- 285/ 152/ 2: ADD; also at <www.depauw.edu.sfs/interviews/suvin36interview.htm>.
- 286: YEAR RUBRIC **1980** SHOULD BE **1989**.
- 286/ 156/ NEW L. 4:
 156b MUCH EXPANDED CHINESE TRANSL. FORTHCOMING FROM Anhui Publ.
- 286/ 157/ NEW AFTER L. 7:
 157e “Horizon (Utopian).” Entry for “Lexicon: 20th Century A.D.,” in *Public* [Toronto] no. 19 (Spring 2000): 72-75. [further development of “horizon”].

- 157f 157d rptd in Suvin, no. 211, *Defined....*
 286/ 160/ NEW L. 4:
 160b In no. 209, Ajdačić ed. 2009. [Y].
 286/ 161/ AFTER L. 6:
 161f *Proxima* [København] no. 59/60 (1994). [Danish].
 161g 161d rptd in Suvin no. 211, *Defined....*
 287/ 164/ 2: ADD; also at <www.deapuw.edu.sfs.interviews.suvin54interview.htm>
 287/ AFTER 165: MISSING ITEM “Preface for the Japanese Reader of *MoSF* (1987)” [publ. in Japanese in 94f (1991)].
 288/ 176/ AFTER L. 2:
 176b In no. 209, Ajdačić ed. 2009. [Y].
 288/ 178/ NEW L. 4 AND AFTER:
 [Translation of original, much longer variant, see 178e; Y].
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 288/ 179/ AFTER L. 2:
 179b In no. 209, Ajdačić ed. 2009. [Y].
 179c In *Filozofska istraživanja* 25.3 [2005]: 543-70. [Y].
 179d In Suvin no. 211, *Defined....*
 288/ AFTER 179, NEW ITEMS PUBLISHED FROM 1998 ON:

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- 195 "The Final Chapter of SF?: On Reading Brian Stableford." *SFRA R* no. 266 (2003): 5-9 and no. 267 (2004): 2-6.
 195b "On Some Key Points for Understanding SF: Use, Corpus, History, Prospects." *UBIQ* no. 4 (2009): 167-82. [With parts of 112 and 169; Y].
 195c In no. 209, Ajdačić ed. 2009. [Y].

- 196 "Sul concetto di utopia in epoca moderna" [The Concept of Utopia in Our Times]. *Nuova secondaria* 5 (gennaio 2004): 105-11. [Italian].
- 197 "Circumstances and Stances." *PMLA* 11.3 (2004): 535-38.
- 197b *UBIQ* no. 1 (2007): 159-64.
- 197c In no. 209, Ajdačić ed. 2009. [Y].
- 198 "Narciso e Anteo: il collettivismo deve per forza essere contro la gente?" in G. Maniscalco Basile and D. Suvin eds., *Nuovissime mappe dell'inferno* (see 199), 149-64. [Italian].
- 199 Co-editor (with Giovanni Maniscalco Basile) of *Nuovissime mappe dell'inferno: Distopia oggi*. Roma: Monolite Ed., 2004. 167pp. [9 contributions, including 197 and 198; Italian].
- 200 "Fantasy as Critique and Cognition." In C. Bordoni ed., *Linee d'ombra: letture del fantastico in onore di Romolo Runcini*. Cosenza: Pellegrini, 2004, 269-77.

2005

- 201 "Of Starship Troopers and Refuseniks: War and Militarism in US Science Fiction." D. Suvin ed., annual *Fictions* (Rome) no. 3 (see 204), 107-54. [Includes long primary bibliography from 1889 to 1997]
- 201b "Part 1 (1945-1974: Fordism)." In D.M. Hassler and C. Wilcox eds., *New Boundaries in Political Science Fiction*. Columbia SC: U of S. Carolina P, 2008, 115-44.
- 201c "Part 2 (1975-2001: Post-Fordism, and Some Conclusions)." *Extrapolation* 48.1 (2007): 9-34.
- 201d *UBIQ* no. 5 (2009): 175-226. [Y].
- 202 (With Salvatore Proietti) "War and Militarism in Science Fiction: A Select Bibliography of Criticism in English." In D. Suvin ed., *Fictions* no. 3 (see 204), 155-63.
- 203 "Guest Editor's Preface," in D. Suvin ed., *Fictions* no. 3 (see 204), 9-11.
- 204 Guest editor of annual *Fictions* (Rome) no. 3, special issue on *US Science Fiction and War/ Militarism*. Pisa & Roma: IEPI, 2005. 166p. [10 contributions, including 201-203].

2006

- 205 *Gdje smo? Kuda idemo?: Za političku epistemologiju spasa* [Where Are We? What Are We Coming to?: For a Political Epistemology of Salvation]. Transl. M. Krivak. Zagreb:

- Hrvatsko Filozofsko društvo, 2006. 220pp. [No. 179c and four more politico-epistemological essays plus Preface; Y]
 205b *Kje smo? Kam gremo? Za politično ekonomiju odrešitve*. Ljubljana: Založba Sophia, 2010. Transl. M. Lovrenov. 265pp. [transl. from English original of 204 expanded to 6 essays; Y]
 206 "To Remember Stanislaw Lem." *Studi slavistici* no. 3 (ott.-nov. 2006): electronic pp.
 206b *Extrapolation* 47.1 [2006]: 30-34. [in part].
 206c *Das Argument* no. 265 [2006]: 186-93. [German].
 206d *Književna smotra* no. 141-42 [2006]: 99-103, also *UBIQ* no. 1 (2007): 165-73. [Y].
 206e *Robot* 5.10 (2007): 54-62, also on <www.carmillaonline.com/archives/2007/07/002320.html> and <-002324.html> [Italian].
 206f IT SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED IN *Oi Dramatourgoi ton Giann* [Greek].
 206g *Proxima* no. 86 (2007): 19-28. [Danish].
 206h In no. 209, Ajdačić ed. 2009. [Y].
 207 "On U.K. Le Guin's 'Second Earthsea Trilogy' and Its Cognitions: A Commentary." *Extrapolation* 47.3 (Winter 2006): 488-504.

2007

- 208 "Introduzione sui generi letterari e la Fantascienza." *Sincronie* [Roma] no. 20 (2007): 217-27. [revisits no. 45, "Cognition and Estrangement," with new first half on sociology of genres; Italian].

2008

- 209 "Cognition, Freedom, *The Dispossessed* as a Classic." In S. Kelso ed. *Ursula K. Le Guin. Paradoxa* no. 21 (2008): 23-49. [partial preprint of 209b].
 209b In Suvin no. 212, *Defined....* [full version].
 209c In no. 210, Ajdačić ed. 2009. [full version; Y].

2009

210 *Naučna fantastika, spoznaja, sloboda* [Science Fiction, Cognition, Freedom]. Ed. Dejan Ajdačić. Beograd: SlovoSlavia, 2009. 395pp. [No.s 37, 39, 40, 45, 176, 142, 109, 144, 160, 178, 179, 191, 112+169+195, 188, 197, 206, 209c; Y].

211 [Interview with Maria Xilouris.] "Logotekhnia, politike, outopia" [Literature, Politics, Utopia]. *Aristera!* [Athens] March 20, 2009, Supplement 1-4.

2010

212 *Defined by a Hollow: Essays on Utopia, Science Fiction, and Political Epistemology*. Oxford UK: P. Lang, 2010. xxxiii + 582pp. [12 essays and 6 series of poems from 1973 to 2008, beginning with utopia and SF, ending in political epistemology; includes no's 52, 81, 109, 157, 161, 178d, 179, 191, 209b].

213 "Introduction 2008: On Hollows, Or An Alarmed Door." In no. 212 (above), 1-15.

214 "Uvod za hrvatskog čitaoca" [Introduction for the Croatian Reader]. In *Metamorfoze znanstvene fantastike* [Metamorphoses of SF], see 94i.

215 "Introduction P.S. for the Slovene Reader [of *Where Are We?*]." In 205b, xx-xxiv. [Y].

216 "Stanley Weinbaum: We've Met the Aliens and They Are Us." *Extrapolation* 52.2 (2011) [forthcoming; shortened version].

216b *UBIQ* no. 7 [2010]: 227-37. [full version; Y].

2011

217 [Interview with Andres Lomeña on *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction*]. <www.sociodicea.es/?p=79> or Archives.

218 "Darwinism, Left And Right: And Two S-F Probes." (forthcoming in *Foundation*).

219 [Interview with Riccardo Ciccarelli.] "Gli esploratori del pianeta Utopia." *Il Manifesto*, 29.5.2011, p. 10. [Italian].

220 *Darko Suvin: A Life in Letters*. [This book: 26 items, of which 9 poetry or fictional prose; includes no's 37, 84, Preface for the Japanese Reader of *MoSF*, 196, 197].

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288/ Appendix/ 3: NEW LINE BEGINS AT Zoran.

288/ Appendix/ AFTER PRESENT L. 5:

James Blish. [Introductory note to] D. Suvin, "The Science Fiction Novel in 1969." In J. Blish ed., *Nebula Award Stories Five*. New York: Doubleday, and London: Gollancz, 1970, 193, and New York: Pocket Books, 1972, 152.

290/ Appendix/ BETWEEN Broderick AND Roda: INSERT <http://isbndb.com/d/person/suvin_darko.html> [book list, ends 1996].

290/ end: ADDITIONS OF NEW REVIEWS:

Veronica Hollinger. "Contemporary Trends in SF Criticism, 1998-1999." *Science-Fiction Studies* 26.2 (1999): 233.

Dušica Lukić. "U igri fantazije." *Detinjstvo* no. 1-2 (2000), available at <www.zmajevedecjeigre.org.yu/detinjstvo/brl-2_00/> [Y].

Learning from Other Worlds: Estrangement, Cognition and the Politics of Science Fiction and Utopia. Ed. Patrick Parrinder. Liverpool: Liverpool UP, 2000 & Durham: Duke UP, 2001. 312pp. [A *Festschrift* for DS upon retirement].

"Darko Suvin: Checklist of Printed Items that Concern Science Fiction (with Utopian Fiction)...." In *Learning* (above), 272-290 [179 items up to 1998, see title of this Bibliography].

Patrick Parrinder. "Learning from Other Worlds" and "Revisiting Suvin's Poetics of Science Fiction." In *Learning* (above), 1-16 and 36-50.

Tom Moylan. "'Look into the dark': On Dystopia and the No-vum." In *Learning* (above), 51-71; variant version in his *Scraps of the Untainted Sky*. Boulder: Westview P, 2000, 42-48, 63-64, 75-77, 136-37, 150-52, 299, and passim.

Adam Roberts. *Science Fiction*. London: Routledge, 2000, 7-10, 16-18, 59, 64.

Bo Fowler. "The Science of Fiction." *New Humanist* March 1, 2001, <www.newhumanist.org.uk/volume116issue1>.

Jimmy McCroy. "Learning from Other Worlds." *SFRA R.* no. 252 (2001): 9-10.

Alcena M.D. Rogan. "Learning from Other Worlds." *South Atlantic R.* 67.2 (2002): 105-08.

Sonia Fritzsche. *Utopian Studies* Jan. 2002 [review of no. 186, *For Lack of Knowledge*].

Fredric Jameson. *Archaeologies of the Future: The Desire Called*

Utopia and Other Science Fictions. London & New York: Verso, 2005, xiv, 63, 257, 282, 410, 414-15.

Hermann Ritter. "Inklings Jahrbuch für Literatur und Ästhetik." *Magira: Jahrbuch zur Fantasy 2004*. Eds. H. Ritter et al. [s.l.], 430-32 [review of no. 183d].

Raffaella Baccolini and Tom Moylan [with Darko Suvin]. "Dialogo sulla distopia (e) anti-utopia: riflessione sulla persistenza dell'utopia." In no. 199, 35-52 [e-mail discussion with DS about no. 197, on utopia and dystopia immediately after the Twin Towers attack; Italian].

Sheryl Vint. "Marleen Barr, ed. *Envisioning the Future....*" *Extrapolation* 46.1 (2005): 144-49. [on no. 191].

Domenico Gallo. "Maniscalco Basile/ Suvin: *Nuovissime mappe dell'inferno*." *Pulp* no. 59 (2006): 54. [review of no. 199; Italian].

M. Giulia Fabi. "Italian Contributions." In *American Literary Scholarship: An Annual, 2005*. Ed. Gary Scharnhorst. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2007, 499-500. [on no. 204, *Fictions* 2005].

Phillip Wegner. "Darko Suvin." Entry in Mark Bould et al. eds. *50 Key Figures in Science Fiction*. NY & L: Routledge, 2009.

Marijan Krivak. "Zapolitičku epistemologiju spasa Darka Suvina" [For DS's Political Epistemology of Salvation]. *Gordogan* (Zagreb) no. 15-18 (2008-09): 192-96. [Y].

Canadian Who's Who 45 (2010): 1265 (also as CD ROM).

Gerry Canavan. "Marxism as Science Fiction." *Reviews in Cultural Theory* 1.1 (2010): 4 electronic pp. <www.reviewsinculture.com/?r=23> accessed 14/9/2010. [review of no. 211].

Phillip Wegner. "Pionir znanstvene fantastike." *Zarez* (Zagreb) 12.293, 14/10/2010, 40-41. [expanded version of entry in *50 Key Figures in Science Fiction* above; Y].

Carlo Pagetti. "Znanstveno-fantastične transformacije Darka Suvina" [DS's SF Metamorphoses]. *Zarez* no. 294, 28/10/2010, p. 33.; rpt. as Preface to Suvin no. 94i [Y].

Phillip Wegner. "Preface: Emerging from the Flood in which We Are Sinking..." In Suvin no. 211, *Defined...*, xv-xxxiii.

Vjeran Katunarić. "Utopija i spas: svjetovi Darka Suvina" [Utopia and Salvation]. *Zarez* 13.303, 17/2/2011, p. 38. [review of no. 211; Y].

Tonči Valentić. "Pionir teorije SF-a." *Zarez* 13.303, 17/2/2011, p. 39. [review of no. 94i; Y].

Carl Freedman. "An Adorno for Our Time." *Extrapolation* 52.1 (2011): 110-16. [review of no. 211].

Ante Jerić. "Igra začudnosti i spoznaje" [A Game of Estrangement and Cognition]. <www.kulturpunkt.hr/i/kulturoskop/527> [review of no. 94i; Y].

Riccardo Ciccarelli. [Two notes on DS accompanying no. 218], *Il Manifesto*, 29/5/2011, p. 10. [Italian].

Bibliography B

Checklist of Printed Poetry and Non-Scholarly Prose

I started writing poetry in Croatoserbian (in its variant of “Croatian literary language”) in 1951 and continued until roughly 1964, with a very few more at particular autobiographical occasions between 1974 and 1982. I wrote also in English (some fairly bad imitations of Shakespearian sonnets and other classical forms) during studies in the U.K. (1954/55), some during studies in the USA (1964/65), but then no more until the mid-70s in Canada when I started dreaming in English. To differentiate the poems from scholarly prose, they are usually signed with the full name of D(arko) R(onald) Suvin. A few poems insisted on being written first in one language and immediately thereafter in another. After my transfer to Europe in 2001, and especially after 2005, I again started writing poetry in Croatoserbian, but continued also in English.

The sections are divided for easier access into subsections by printing category, also by language, plus translations by and of DS. Within each subsection the order is chronological.

A note on haiku: having read and studied all the Japanese haiku I could find in translation or in transliteration, also their theory and phonetics, even written a long essay on translating one brief haiku (in my *Lessons of Japan*), I concluded—like many Japanese poets from Shiki on—that a number of orthodox rules from the 17th Century on, including the use of the “season word,” were no longer needed in other languages or in our era. The units of haiku were not syllables but breath units; so after some years I shifted from 5+7+5 syllables to 2+3+2 stresses. (I’ve even tried my hand at a couple of haiku in Japanese, no doubt horrendous.)

1. DS’S POEMS

1.1. Books and in Books by DS

- *The Long March: Notes on the Way 1981-1984*. Willowdale ON: Hounslow Press, 1987. x+106pp. [81 poems of the “Chinese phase”; include a no. printed in anthologies or magazines below 1981-87].
- *Armirana Arkadija [An Armoured Arcadia]*. Zagreb: Naprijed, 1990. 122pp. [37 poems, a selection of about ¼ of those written 1952-64; 3 written occasionally 1974-82, and 1 redone from English 1989; many were printed earlier in various Zagreb and Beograd periodicals between 1960 and 1988].

- “Poems 1: At the Outset” [Willow, Willow; At the Ferry a Boat]; Poems 2: Wanting” [Three Tankas of Want; A Holiday; O Karl 3]; “Poems 4: Adaptations, Disputations, Variations, Visitations, & Other Complimentary Thefts” [Prince Kasuga; Three Disputings; Voices of Necessity; Variations on Bunan; Remembering Komachi; On Reading *Hyaku-nin-isshu*; 3 Tankas from Japan; 28 Haiku on Japanese Themes; Adapting Saigyô]; “Poems 5: *Visions Off Yamada*”; “Poems 6: Mihatenu yume” [8 Haiku of ’85; Song of the Unfinished Dream]; “Poems 7: At the Ending” [A Tanka for Carolyn; “This hour this place”; “If it’s torn off”; Ichigo ichie; Enlightening]. *Lessons of Japan*. Montréal: CIA-DEST, 1996, 25-27, 62-63, 120-27, 172-76, 217-18, 239-40.
- “Three Poems in Time of Blights” [Imagine a Fish; Ein garstig Lied; Much Too Long]. *For Lack of Knowledge: On the Epistemology of Politics as Salvation*. Pullman WA: Working Papers Series in Cultural Studies, Ethnicity, and Race Relations, No. 27, 2001, 5-6.

The following two entries in volumes by various hands I’d like to claim as a surrogate volume of my own, which it would have been had I found a publisher; the second follows chronologically on the first:

- “Parentheses: An (Auto)Biography Sparked by Verse.” *Abiko Annual* no. 24 (2004): 132-258. [; Japan].
- “Ex: Retrospective Poems... 2000-2005.” *Abiko Annual* no. 25 (2006): 223-45. [12 poems, often subdivided, most notably in the final long poem “Ode in the Guise of the Most Famous Poetess Psapfo...”; Japan].
- “Ch. 4—Poems of Doubt and Hope 1983-1988” [Shipwreck in Pannonia; Jugendbewegung; Eighty-Foure Is Ycummen In; Rebellions; The Two Fishes; Parliament of Foules; A Letter to My Friend, Disenchanted after 1968; 3 Commentaries on *The Way and the Power*; After the Fall; Song of the Insufficiency of Human Endeavours in Late Capitalism and Early Socialism; One-Legged Life; Disputing Sôgyô; *Visions Off Yamada*]; “Ch. 7—The Doldrums: 8 Nasty Poems of 1989-1991” [The Return of the Ancestors; Le Ceneri di Tito; Ein garstig Lied; Köln, Am Dom; Montréal 1994; Imagine a Fish; Old Age, Letting Go; Alas Indeed!]; “Ch. 14—7 Poems from the Utopian Hollow... 2000-2005” [I’m into Your World; “We Shall Behold”; Ex: Fudô 2000; 3 Doctrines from Heine; In the Ruins of Leningrad; Reading *The Secret Treasury (Hizôhōyaku)*; Aequinox]; “Ch.

17—5 Farewell Fantasies of 2006-2009” [A Martial Epigram on Martians; Cold Comfort; Pillaging the Gnostics; Haecceitas; Sonnet for Reinventing Tomorrow]. *Defined by a Hollow*. Oxford: P. Lang, 2010, 93-109, 157-67, 413-18, 503-08.

1.2. In Books by Various Hands (in English)

- “In Han-Shan’s Style.” *Earthshine*, Vol. 5, Poetry Press, Pittsburg TX 1983.
- “A Mediterranean Sonnet on Sexual Synthesis.” *The American Poetry Anthology*, Vol. 1.3-4, American Poetry Assn., Santa Cruz CA 1983.
- “By the Long March.” *Journeys of the Poet/Prophet*, New Worlds Unlimited, Saddle Brook NJ 1983.
- “To Her Hasty Lover.” *Hearts on Fire*, American Poetry Assn., Santa Cruz CA 1983.
- “Suddenly a whirl-” and “Once I was smooth jade.” *Raindrops*, Yes Press, Waynesboro TN 1985. [2 haiku].
- “Adieu au Voyage,” “Souveraineté-Association,” “Kamenita vrata,” and “Ancient Airs and Canadian Cars.” *WPBS Poetry* pamphlet, Ottawa, Spring 1985. [some misprints].
- “Setsubun” and “The Scared.” *Black on White* 1985, Ursus Press, San Diego CA. [first prize and 2nd prize for the respective poems].
- “A Sprig For a Rose.” *Our World’s Most Cherished Poems*, World of Poetry Press 1985.
- “Kamenita vrata.” *Best International Poems*, WPBS Poetry, Ottawa, Canada, 1986. [weird indentation].
- “Old and New Wisdom.” *New Poets—Four*. Ursus Press, San Diego CA 1986. [shared first prize].
- “Song of the Spinster,” “The Watch Given...,” and “Yes, Tu Fu.” *Shorelines* 1986, De Long & Assoc., Annapolis MD. [honorable mention for each of these three poems].
- “A Dialog by the Stream,” “Tanka in Discontent of Winter,” “The Dry Waterfall,” “Parliament of Foules,” and “On First Truly Reading Tu Fu’s *Falcon Painting*,” *Black on White* 1986, Ursus Press, San Diego CA. [honorable mention for the first four].
- “Four Tankas From Japan,” “Reading Wen Ting-yun...,” and “Yes Shiki.” *Plum Blossom*, Stevan Publ, Austin TX 1987. [many misprints in the last].
- “On/To Shushi.” *More Garden Varieties*, League of Canadian Poets/ Aya Press, Toronto 1989.

- “Calm clouds uncoil,” “I am out of touch,” and “The days without you.” *Four Seasons*, Kô Poetry Assn., Nagoya (Japan) 1991. [haiku].
- “Disputing Sôgyô.” *Haiku zasshi zô* anthology 1989. [3 haiku].
- “From an Emigrant’s Diary: 1989-92” [The Return of the Ancestors; Cognitive Estrangement; From the Analects of Post-Modernism; Three More Haiku Allegories; Willow, Willow; Imagine a Fish; Alas indeed!; A Final Haiku]. *IABLIS: Jahrbuch für europäische Prozesse*. Heidelberg: Manutius V., 2002, 124-29.
- Autobiography 2004: De Darci Natura. “*IABLIS: Jahrbuch für europäische Prozesse*. Heidelberg: Manutius V., 2004, 261-65.

1.3. In Books by Various Hands (in Croatoserbian)

- “Kronika Kuzme Kozmografa” and “Uskočivši u isprepleteni život bilja” [both 1961]. *Andromeda SF3*. Beograd: BIGZ, 1978. [“SF poetry”; first poem disfigured by printing it as prose].
- Three poems from *The Long March* (“Meditativni sonet,” “Ori-jentirni sonet,” “Psihin sonet”) rptd. in Stijepo Mijović Kočan ed., *Skupljena baština: Suvremeno hrvatsko pjesništvo 1940-1990*. Zagreb: Školske novine, 1993.

1.4. In Magazines in English

(all are in USA or Canada unless identified otherwise)

- “The Sunflower of Sense.” *Velocities* (Spring 1983).
- “Hiroshige’s Iris Garden at Horikiri.” *Amelia* (Oct. 1984). [2nd Prize for Oriental Forms].
- “Souvenir d’Italie.” *Wide Open* (Dec. 1984).
- “Borrowed by the pond.” *Haiku zasshi zô* (Dec. 1984). [haiku; first prize].
- “Eighty-Foure Is Y-cummen In.” *Foundation* no. 32 (1984). [London, UK].
- “On Hearing Love Is Over Between Us.” *International Poetry Forum* (Summer 1985).
- “If.” *Amelia* (Oct. ‘85). [tanka].
- “If I were the Moon.” *Amelia* (Oct. 1985). [haiku; published as postcard].
- “An Introduction to Li.” *Wide Open* (Dec. 1985).

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- “Tu Fu, Thinking of Li Po in the Winter.” *The Inkling Journal* (Dec. 1985).
 - “Sudden raindrops drum.” *Haiku zasshi zô* (Dec. 1985). [haiku].
 - “A la recherche.” *Frogpond* (Feb. 1986). [sequence of 4 haiku].
 - “Putting It Aright.” *Cicada*, A Supplement to *Amelia* (Spring 1986). [2 haiku].
 - “Presupposed in Painting Bamboo.” *Queens Quarterly* (Autumn 1986).
 - “The Two Fishes,” “Reflections Upon Eating a Ricotta Cake,” and “Face Hippocrates.” *Scrivener* (Winter 1986). [McGill Univ. student periodical].
 - *Eleven Visions of Mount Fuji. Cow in the Road* (Winter/Spring 1987). [long poem].
 - “how could we creatures” [later *Virgilian Tanka*].” *Poetry Nippon* no. 77-78 (March 1987). [Japan].
 - “A caterpillar,” “An old butterfly,” and “Two guests visit me.” *Kô* 8.5 (1987). [haiku with facing Jap. translations; Nagoya, Japan].
 - “unbelievably.” *Frogpond* 10.4 (Nov. 1987). [haiku].
 - “a stag cries.” *Amelia* no. 10 (1987). [haiku; honourable mention].
 - “Mutsûra” and “Late Than Never.” *Discours social/ Social Discourse* 1.3 (Winter 1988).
 - “Unfair Universe” and “The Horns.” *Poetry Nippon* no. 83 (1988). [tankas; Japan].
 - “I am out of touch,” “The days without you,” and “How can one fight this” [early versions]. *Kô* (Autumn-Winter 1988). [three haiku; Japan].
 - “Double Bind.” *Queens Quarterly* (Winter 1988).
 - “Shipwreck in Pannonia.” *Pig Iron* no. 15 (1988).
 - “Fugue and Variations on My Fifty-Something Birthday” and “Le Membre fantôme.” *Dichtungsring* no. 14-16 (1988-89). [Germany].
 - “To the Lighthouse” and “Buddhist Lessons.” *Poet’s Gallery* no. 1 (1989).
 - “Li Ching-zhao’s (Im)Mortality.” In *Poetic Liberty* 2.2 (Spring 1989).
 - “calm clouds uncoil” [later title *Enlightening*]. *Kô* (Spring-Summer 1989). [haiku; Japan].
 - “Remembering Komachi” [haiku] and “The Wind” [tanka]. *Poetry Nippon* no. 87 (1989). [Japan].

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- “One-Legged Life.” *Matrix* (Spring 1989).
 - “romantic nature” [later title *Missing*] and “In the Style of Bashô’s School.” *Kô* (Autumn-Winter 1989). [2 haiku; Japan].
 - “Three Poems Doubting Mikhail Mikhailovich Sensei (or do they?)” (The Return of the Ancestors, Fall Pastoral, and From the Analects of Post-Modernism). *Social Discourse/ Discours social* 3.1-2 (1990).
 - “A Broken Poem for Akiko-san.” *Abiko Quarterly Rag* 2.1-2 (1990). [Japan].
 - “Köln, am Dom” [in English]. *Dichtungsring* no. 19 (1990). [Germany].
 - “Two Poems” (On N’s Portrait by M. Stančić; Cognitive Estrangement). *Printed Matter* (Spring 1991). [Japan].
 - “Porphyry’s Tree,” “Here- Words Not-Here Things,” and “From a Chinese Drawing.” *Poet’s Gallery* 2.2 (1991).
 - “Marching through the BB Mountain Range” and “An Obituary to One Self.” *The Brecht Yearbook* 20 (1995).
 - [Roland Wyser.] *Kamikaze Eros: An Inter-cultural Mini-epic in Quasi-hexameters*. *Abiko Quarterly* (Fall-Winter 1996): 124-54.
 - “Garstige Lieder über Jugoslawien” (Growing Old without Yugoslavia; Bear City Sonnet; Summer, on a Hill [early version]. *Dichtungsring* no. 23 (1995). [Germany].
 - “this fireproof door.” *Kô* (Autumn-Winter 1998). [haiku; Japan].
 - “The Taboo” and “Imagine a Fish.” *Femspec* 1.1 (1999).
 - “4 Variations on Heine, for YK.” *The Abiko Annual* no. 21 (2001). [Japan].
 - “Tanka 1986-1992.” *The Abiko Annual* no. 22 (2002). [27 tankas; Japan].
 - “Last Haiku 1991-97.” (Three Goodbye Haiku; Three Haiku on Hatsumi-sama; Three Haiku, April ‘91; “smoothing out the moonlight”; 4 Haiku From Heian Tankas; 5 Haiku on Man’yôshû Themes; Doubting Ssu-ma Chien [2 haiku]; Three Haiku of 1993 [“Hakone mountains”; “unbelievably”; “In my dream i find again”]; My Short 20th Century: Rômusha haiku from Ozland [14 haiku]). *The Abiko Annual* no. 22 (2002). [38 haiku; Japan].
 - “Poems On/From/Sparked by Japan” (Second Tsukuda[-]jima Poem; A Broken Japanese Poem for Akiko-san; 3 Tankas from Japan). *The Abiko Annual* no. 23 (2003). [Japan].
 - “Rome 2004.” *Dichtungsring* no. 33 (2004). [Germany; see also 1.7].

- “Poems of Old Age, 1999-2000” (Poetry Is; I’m into Your World; “We shall behold”; “Come back, come back, beautiful instant”; Ex: Fudô 2000; Three Ditties out of Nash from Heine; 13 Departures from Heine; Zum Geleit; Die Verwandlung, 1990s; You, Giacomo Leopardi). *The Abiko Annual* no. 27 (2005). [Japan].

1.5. In Magazines in Croatoserbian

- “Novela od Darka.” *Književnik* no. 11 (1960).
- “Sezonska pjesma iz daleka.” *Književnik* no. 20 (1961).
- “Lunička vilaneta na 29. rođendan.” *Književne novine* [Beograd] (1962?).
- “Jesenska pastorala.” *Telegram* 14/9/1962.
- “Nokturno na zimski solsticij 1959,” “Ballatetta o mijeni mikrokozama,” and “Spoznaja posljednja.” *Danas* [Beograd] no. 2 (1962).
- “Uskočivši u isprepleteni život bilja” and “Tri soneta na barokne teme [Duhovni sonet, Sonet preuzvišenim očima, Smrtni sonet].” *Telegram* 20/9/1963.
- “Spoznaje Arkadije” [full]. *Književnost* no. 8 (1970).
- *Savremenik* or *Književnost* 1974/75?
- “Psihin sonnet,” “Lacrimae rerum,” and “Cijele noći prolazile su ptice.” *Delo* [Beograd] no. 10 (1974).
- “Pet pjesama” (U kozmičkom brodu; Posljednja želja i oporuka; Na papirnatom zmaju; Vinobojno more; Truda, Trude, Trudi, Trudu, o Trudo, s Trudom). *Forum* no. 4-6 (1983).
- “Pet pjesama” (Porinuti sonet; Zimska priča o Evropi; Preko mučnih kamenih gora leži kraljevstvo; Pjesma blazirane djevojke; Orijentirni sonet). *Republika* no. 6 (1984).
- “Homer, Nauzikaja”; “Stabljika cvijeta”; “Osvajanje grada”; “Kronika Kuzme kozmografa”; “posljednja želja i oporuka”; “Na papirnatom zmaju”; “Vinobojno more”; “To zlatno staro vrijeme”; “Mandarinu Vej Čiju”; “Balada o emigriralom intelektualcu”. *Republika* no. 1-2 (1988).
- “Osjet smislom putuje k istini” (Zamisli ribu; Vidjet ćemo; Vрати se, vrati, prekrasni trenu; Pisar ima viziju; Rim 2004). *Poezija* 3.3-4 (2007). [see 1.7].
- “7 pjesama, 1985-2008” (Zamisli ribu; Pejzaž sa bogovima i totenancom; Čitajući Lukanovu “Pharsaliju”; Tri tangente od Heinea; Pisar ima viziju; Varijacija na Villona; Senryû). *Književna republika* no. 1-3 (2009). [see also 1.7.].

- *Za Zagrebom: Bilješke iz dnevnika 1966. i 1985-2009.* (Ovaj planet U.S.A.; Kokoro aru; Uz fotografiju nadgrobne ploče s novododanim imenom mog oca; “Dani–godine–dekade”; Ivane, volio bih...; Partizanskim borbama, 1941-45; Čitajući pjesnike epohe Sung; Sonet o ponovnom otkriću sutrašnjice; “Plači Zagrebe...”; *Magnarum rerum parva sepulcra*; Juvenal mlađi: satirice, destilat od tatice; Narodna godine gospodnje 2009; Dvije pjesme zbog Johna Bergera; Iz *11 vizija planina Fuji*...: 10. Skladište drva pod vedrim nebom u Edu). *Mali zarez*, supplement to *Zarez* (Zagreb) no. 260, 25/6/2009. [for no. 3, 8, and 14, see also 1.7. Translations].

1.6. Translations by DS

Records are sketchy and incomplete.

1.6.1. Into CroatoSerbian

Translations from various languages in DS. *Od Lukijana do Lunjika* [From Lucian to the Lunik], historical survey and anthology of SF. Zagreb: Epoha, 1965: Lucian, *True Stories*; Giordano Bruno (attributed to), “Poi chè ho spiegato le ali,” sonnet; Francis Bacon, *The New Atlantis*; fragments from Edward Bellamy, *Looking Backward*, and William Morris, *News from Nowhere*; SF stories by Chad Oliver, R. Sheekley, B.W. Aldiss, F. Brown, J. Christopher, Wallace West [some in collaboration].

Translations from English include:

- “Na sudu” [In the Court, a fragment from Ben Jonson’s *Volpone*]. *Vidici* [Sl. Brod] no. 4-5 (1953); the whole play was translated by DS for the director Tito Strozzi who staged it in the Komedijska theatre, Zagreb, 1953 [in prose, the Politic Would-be subplot largely suppressed].
- Poems by Louis MacNeice. *Krugovi*, mid 1950s.
- Three poems by Walt Whitman in the late 1950s, publication unknown.
- John Wyndham. *Day of the Triffids*, SF novel; as *Dan obračuna*. Zagreb: Lykos, 1961.
- “Beowulf.” *Republika* no. 12 (1961); rpt. in *100 najvećih djela svjetske književnosti*. Ed. A. Šoljan. Zagreb: Stvarnost, 1962; also in *Čitanka iz stranih književnosti I*. Ed. N. Košutić-Brozović.

- Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 2nd edn. 1971, 14th edn. 1987 [from the Anglo-Saxon, two long fragments in alliterative verse].
- Wystan Hugh Auden. “Šest pjesama” [6 poems]. *Zadarska revija* no. 3 (1962).
 - Lawrence Ferlinghetti. “Približni opis večere u čast zamisli o suđenju Predsjedniku Eisenhoweru.” *Danas* [Beograd] 9/5/1962, p. 8 [transl. of “An Approximate Account of Dinner in Honour of... Impeaching Pres. Eisenhower” (1958), original poem title reconstructed from memory].
 - (with Truda Suvin). John Christopher. “Čovjek sudbine” [The Man of Destiny]. *Telegram* 19/10/1962. [SF short story].
 - Algernon Swinburne. “Dva zbora iz *Atalante u Kalidonu*” [Two Choruses from *Atalanta in Calydon*]. *Riječka revija* no. 3 (1964).
 - (with Truda Suvin) James Blish. *The Seedling Stars*; as *Zvezdane spore*. Beograd: Jugoslavija, 1967; rptd. Beograd: Kentaur, 1978. [SF novel].

Translations from German include:

- Works by Bertolt Brecht, in DS, *Uvodu Brechta* (An Introduction to B). Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 1970: 48 poems, *Das Leben des Galilei* (play, with S. Goldstein, performed in Zagreb in 1969), *Der Jasager und der Neinsager* (plays, also performed in Zagreb in the 70s), *Kleines Organon* (essay).
- Essays, and some poems, on theatre by Bertolt Brecht: in DS ed., *Dijalektika u teatru*. Beograd: Nolit, 1966.
- Peter Weiss. *Marat/Sade*, play; performed in Split [in verse], ca. 1966 or later.

Translations from French include:

- “Sartre u Zagrebu” [Sartre in Z]. *Telegram* of 21/5/1960, p. 5 [text of interview transl. and ed. by DS].

1.62. Into English:

Translations from Croatoserbian:

- “Miroslav Krleža: A Song of the Gallows-bird,” in Janko Lavrin ed., *An Anthology of Modern Yugoslav Poetry*. London: Calder, [1962?]. [In the early 1960s, DS also translated into English

poems from the two major Croatian poets before and after WW2, five from Krleža and ten from Jure Kaštelan].

Translations from Japanese include:

- [Three haiku: one by Kyôrai and 2 by Bashô]. *Haiku zasshi zô* (June 1985). [Japan].
- Kyôrai. “Bare rock, high top.” *Mainichi Daily News* 8/9/1985. [Japan].
- *Translating the Haiku Classics* (12 haiku: 2 by Buson, 5 by Onitsura, 2 by Issa, 3 by Shiki). *Kô* (Autumn-Winter 1988). [Japan].
- “Poems 3: Haiku More or Less Freely from Issa” [13 haiku], in DS, *Lessons of Japan*. Montréal: CIADEST, 1996, 91-92.

1.7. Translations of DS's Works

Into Japanese:

- 3 haiku in *Kô* magazine 1987 (see 1.4 above).

Into German:

- “Der Notstand.” Transl. Truda Suvin. *Dichtungsring* no. 19 (1990). [Germany].
- “Geislinger Friedhof.” Transl. Gerd Willée. *Dichtungsring* no. 21 (1992).
- “Andromeda.” Transl. Renate Solbach. *Zeno* no. 21 (1999).
- “Rom 2004” [unauthorized]. Transl. Gerd Willée. *Dichtungsring* no. 33 (2004).

Into Croatian:

- “Osjet smislom putuje k istini” (Zamisli ribu; Vidjet ćemo; Vрати се, врати, прекрасни трену; Pisar ima viziju; Rim 2004). Transl. Sanja Lovrenčić [and DS]. *Poezija* 3.3-4 (2007). [see 1.7].
- “Zamisli ribu”; “Tri tangente od Heinea”; “Pisar ima viziju.” Transl. Sanja Lovrenčić [and DS]. *Književna republika* no. 1-3 (2009).
- “Uz fotografiju nadgrobne ploče s novododanim imenom mog oca”; “Sonet o ponovnom otkriću sutrašnjice”; “Iz 11 vizija

planina Fuji...: 10. Skladište drva pod vedrim nebom u Edu." Transl. Sanja Lovrenčić [and DS]. *Mali zarez*, supplement to *Zarez* (Zagreb) no. 260, 25/6/2009.

1.8. Some Reviews of DS's Poetry

- Bryan N.S. Gooch. "Integrity" [review of *The Long March*]. *Canadian Literature* no. 117 (1988): 54-55.
- Branka Džebić. "Arkadija D. Suvina" [review of *Armirana Arkadija*]. *Vjesnik* 26/6/1990: 11.
- Michael Hulse. "Tricks With Knives" [review of *The Long March*]. *PN Review* 17.5 (1991): 63-64.
- Sibila Petlevski. "Jedrenje intelektonauta" [review of *Armirana Arkadija*]. *Republika* 47. 9-10 (1991): 267-71.

2. DS'S NON-SCHOLARLY PROSE

I started writing imaginative and/or meditative prose rather late, in Canada in the 80s. These pieces should probably be divided into parables and everything else (odds and ends). All published items are parables except the second item below.

2.1. In Magazines in English

- "Parables from the Warring States Period" [The Carp in a Drought—later suppressed; The Lord Who Loved Dragons; The Quality Wine and the Uncertain Ferry; A Meaningful Life]. *Lyra* 1.2 (1987) [in a small multilingual periodical].
- "Teach 3." *Social Discourse/ Discours social* 1.2 (Spring 1988).
- "The Lemmings in a Bad Season" and "Enlightened and Informed." *Matrix* (Spring 1989).
- "Clutching at Measuring Straws." *The Abiko Quarterly* 3.1 (1991).
- "Two Parables from the Warring Regions Period" [Clear and Useful; Dirty Hands]. *Wingspan* (March 1999). Illustrated by Kim Tou Gen. [names transposed into Japanese; W. was the inflight magazine of All Nippon Airways, and I even got paid].
- "Tales of Fu Wen and Other Parables from the Warring States Period" [Just One Small Problem; The Bowyers and the Fletchers; The Many Paths and the Right Direction; The Good Bear

- the Brunt; How to Prepare for Earthly Paradise; The Color-Blind Kitty; The Immortal Lays an Egg]. *Wingspan* (Aug. 1994). Illustrated by Kim Tou Gen. [main title by ed.].
- “The Good Bear the Brunt.” *The Brecht Yearbook* 20 (1995).
 - “Parables from the Warring States Period” (Appetite and Preying; Use Value and Exchange Value; The Legend of a Lasting Banquet; The Sternest Teacher; Mean Means and Fair Ends; The Impatient Cultivator; Carrying the Torch; Better Late than Never; A Proper Grinding; Listening to Criticism; The Naïve Hart; The Decline of the Vices; Consistency and Small Talk). *The Abiko Annual* no. 22 (2002).

2.4. In Magazines in Croatoserbian

- “14 parabola iz razdoblja Zaraćenih Država (1984-87)” (Apetit i grabljivost; Upotrebna vrijednost i razmjenska vrijednost; Najstroži učitelj; Skromna sredstva i krasni konci; Nestrpljivi ratar; Svjetlost baklje; Bolje ikad nego nikad; Jednom je upalilo; Pravilno brušenje; Slušati kritiku; Naivni jelen; Opadanje poroka; Dosljednost i brbljanje). Transl. Marija Mrčela and DS. *Mali zarez*, supplement to *Zarez* (Zagreb) no. 281, 15/4/2010.
- “Još 11 parabola iz razdoblja Zaraćenih Država” (Velikaš koji je volio zmajeve; Kvalitetno vino i nepouzdana skela; Smisleni život?; Les mains sales; Kako se pripremiti za Zemaljski Raj; Mnogo putova i pravi smjer; Izrađivači lukova i izrađivači strijela; Informirani i prosvijetljeni; Tko se slamki za mjerenje laća: Mačkica koja nije raspoznavala boje; Dobri snose teret). *Zarez* (Zagreb) Transl. Marija Mrčela and DS. *Mali zarez*, supplement to *Zarez* (Zagreb) no. 296, 25/11/2010.